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ABSTRACT

Described in this paper is one state's approach to the development and operation of a Research Coordinating Unit (RCU), which is designed to orchestrate research and development activities in vocational education within a state. This approach, based on Illinois's model, depicts program improvement as a continuous process involving such activities as priority determination, research, product development and testing, diffusion, implementation, and impact assessment. The paper is divided into five sections. Section 1 defines a research coordinating unit, explains the purpose of this paper, reviews vocational education program legislation, discusses the influence of the Committee on Vocational Education Research and Development (COVERD) study, and summarizes the key provisions of Subpart 3, Title II of P.L. 94-482. Section 2 discusses the program improvement response from Illinois. Section 3 describes the elements of the research and development section of Illinois's RCU, including the conceptual model for operation, administrative structure, priority setting procedures, evaluation/impact/dissemination/reporting procedures, and university personnel development liaison linkages. Section 4 provides a framework for comprehensive program improvement based on key elements of the Illinois model, and section 5 contains the appendixes, including related forms and guidelines. (BM)

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MANAGING PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT:
ONE STATE'S APPROACH

Technical Paper

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CE 023 890

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The Ohio State University
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Columbus, Ohio

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FOREWORD

Program improvement in vocational education calls for timely investments in research and development activities in response to identified needs. Key elements in this complex process must be carefully orchestrated for efficient and effective use of resources. One state's approach to the development and operation of a research coordinating unit is described in this paper. This model depicts program improvement as a continuous process involving such activities as priority determination, research, product development and testing, diffusion, implementation, and impact assessment. Although this model may not fit into the management framework of every state, the key elements should be found in each state's program improvement operations. The author, Ronald D. McCage, has also provided a useful interpretation of existing legislative mandates in vocational education. This one state's response to legislative mandates represents a valuable contribution to our knowledge of program improvement processes.

The basic concepts in this technical paper have been condensed into an executive summary available from the National Center. The summary has also been submitted to the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) under the same title as this technical paper.

We appreciate reviews of the draft document by Charles Hopkins, Assistant Director for Supportive Services, Oklahoma State Department of Vocational Technical Education; Charles Mojkowski, Educational Consulting Services; and Floyd McKinney, Program Director, National Center. We are indebted to Brenda MacKay and William Hull for their editorial assistance and advice provided in the development of this paper.

Robert E. Taylor, Executive Director
The National Center for Research
in Vocational Education

I. ILLINOIS: A STATE LEVEL MODEL FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT MANAGEMENT THROUGH THE RESEARCH COORDINATING UNIT CONCEPT

A. Introduction: A Research Coordinating Unit Defined

"Just what is a research coordinating unit (RCU)?" "What are the key components and responsibilities of the RCU?" These questions have no doubt been asked of key program improvement leadership personnel in every RCU in every state and territory in this country. People who are not familiar with vocational educators probably expect a quick and concise response. They might tend to be puzzled to hear an experienced RCU director state, "There is no such thing as a single definition or description of an RCU. Each RCU is as different as the state it represents."

Perhaps the best answer is to provide a description of what the RCU should be and/or a description of common RCU models in existence today. These four models include the university-based model, the RCU within a state bureau of research, the RCU within a state department of vocational education, and/or the state director who doubles as the RCU director. The uniqueness of each state's RCU system is a desirable and necessary characteristic to retain in a democratic society. However, a "do your own thing" syndrome should not dominate the situation. Within this ideal and individualistic condition lies an inherent danger that could be very detrimental to long range efforts to ensure a continuing program improvement capacity in vocational education at the state and federal levels.

Very simply stated, the inability to define the RCU or the program improvement concept means that there is no common core around which the RCU function can be organized, managed, and directed. Without this core of common elements, there is not enough consistency 1) to develop an association of colleagues willing to jointly promote and support a concept; 2) to effectively impact on the legislative process; or 3) to define, accomplish, and/or defend their efforts.

Since its beginning, the RCU has been in a constant state of transition. At the present time, many state agencies are remolding their RCU organizations and philosophies to more directly correspond to intent of the 1976 Amendments to the Vocational Education Act. The result has been a drastic and serious change of direction and function for at least half of the states. The changes range from minor adjustments in process and service to total reorganization and reorientation of structure and philosophy.

Although many states have yet to fully comply with the 1976 Amendments, it is evident that a basic RCU model is emerging that can be made applicable to all states. Current federal rules and regulations require a comprehensive plan for program improvement that includes provisions for 1) defining the RCU structure, 2) identifying priorities, 3) addressing how priorities will be accomplished, 4) allocating resources, 5) disseminating results, and 6) reporting to the National Center for Research in Vocational Education which in turn reports to the U.S. Office of Education. The provisions that require each RCU to conduct its activities internally and/or to fund externally through contracts cause each state's RCU to have to move toward a common base and to assume similar management goals and needs. These commonalities have resulted in management systems and components that can be reviewed from a common base while at the same time leave ample room for variations among the states to respond adequately to individual state characteristics. This common base gives Congress and the state directors of vocational education the capability to measure output and effectiveness with more compatibility and accuracy.

The bottom line is simple. State RCUs are charged with defining and operating a comprehensive system for program improvement in vocational education. This system includes coordination of the categorical items of research, exemplary and innovative programs, and curriculum development so that they become a methodological process rather than an end unto themselves. Lack of coordination has been cited as the major weakness of the program improvement concept in the past.

How should the program improvement function operate when managed by a state level research coordinating unit? How should it be organized? What should its concept of operation philosophy be? How should it identify program improvement priorities? How should it support its operation and activities? Whom should it work with? What does "coordinate research, exemplary and innovative programs, and curriculum development" mean? All of these questions, plus many more, are very important and should be answered.

Obviously, they cannot be answered to the satisfaction of everyone. Not every state is going to operate like Texas or Kentucky. Not everyone is going to buy an Illinois or Minnesota approach. Anyone who proposes such an idea is being very naive and immediately reflects a lack of knowledge of the multitude of variables that makes each state distinctively different. For example, a state with a large population receives an allocation of funds from federal vocational education sources that is somewhat relative to that state's population as modified by certain economic, unemployment, and other characteristics of the state. Small states receive a relatively smaller allocation of funds based on the same distribution formula.

This logic carries over to program improvement and supportive service functions. Given positive state direction and leadership coupled with support from upper level management, a large state will typically have a large staff and will conduct its activities through a comprehensive external contracting process. In contrast, a small state will likely be the exact opposite. A small state will generally have a relatively small staff and most of its work will be conducted internally by staff. Often one staff person or unit director will wear several hats. States have the same legislative mandates, but states differ in characteristics and in levels of federal resources provided for accomplishments of these functions. But regardless of these differences, they do have a common core of responsibility. It is this core that will be described in this paper. Simply stated, the problem comes down to the need to establish a commonly accepted operational context or philosophy for program improvement. Once this task is accomplished the management techniques necessary to implement the concept can then be established.

B. Purpose of Paper

This paper has been written to assist persons in state departments of vocational education to design and implement a sound and comprehensive system for program improvement. It is designed to address the various functions of an RCU. The paper is set against a backdrop of the federal legislation and rules and regulations. The paper does not imply that there should be absolute adherence to federal mandates but rather to illustrate that, with minor exceptions, a good piece of legislation does exist and that there is an obligation to implement its intent. The field of vocational education should be pleased that it has a program improvement function built into its legislation. Most other aspects of education do not share this privilege.

C. Review of Vocational Education Program Improvement Legislation

Historically, research and development did not become an official line item of vocational education legislation until the 1963 Vocational Education Act (Public Law 88-210) was enacted into law and became operational in FY 1965. This landmark piece of legislation provided funds to the U.S. Commissioner of Education for the support of grants for research in vocational education and for the establishment of a research coordinating unit (RCU) in each state and trust territory. Illinois was one of an initial group of twenty-four states selected to receive a grant for the purpose of establishing an RCU. The initial group of twenty-four state RCUs became operational August 1, 1965. Between 1965 and late 1969, RCUs were established in all states and territories through this same grant process. Periodic renewal of the grants by the Bureau of Occupational and Adult Education made it possible to maintain the state RCUs through 1969. During this period, funds were primarily used to conduct assessment and evaluation activities and to perform the more traditional research activities.

Toward the end of this period, a trend toward an applied, developmental, and programmatic research concept related to program operation at the local school level began to emerge in several states. When Congress enacted the 1968 Amendments to the 1963 Vocational Education Act (P.L. 90-576), three major provisions were included for the conduct and support of vocational education research and development that had a significant impact in terms of administration and management of these areas. The three provisions and their basic influence were as follows:

1. Congress made research an integral and permanent part of vocational education by providing the Part C line item for research, which provided equal shares of the appropriation to the states and to the U.S. Commissioner of Education. The funds were provided for the conduct of a variety of research and development activities in vocational education as well as for the support of the state research coordinating units. Although it was not strongly emphasized at the time, the language of the 1968 Amendments definitely implied that activities conducted at the state level should be applied and/or programmatic rather than limited to traditional basic research concepts. The Amendments

provided that up to seventy-five percent of the administrative cost of the RCU could be supported from the state's share of funds rather than through the direct grant system operated by the Commissioner under the 1963 Act. Since this action made this provision an integral part of the law causing the funds to go directly to the state, it inherently gave the state directors of vocational education absolute control over the funds intended for support and operation of the RCU. This change subsequently caused the university-based RCUs, which were in the majority at that time, to be gradually moved to the state departments of education and to be incorporated as an integral part of the state educational agency charged with the responsibility for the administration of vocational education. Prior to 1969, approximately sixty percent of the RCUs were located in a state university. By 1979 only eleven percent of the RCUs (6 of 56) remained within a university setting. Legally, all RCUs are now to be included in a state agency setting. However, six states still voluntarily elect to contract with a public university for this function. Most RCUs do make extensive use of university staffs and services through contract or grant provisions to accomplish their respective mission as outlined in the annual state plan for administration of vocational education.

2. In Part D for exemplary programs, funds were made available to states to facilitate implementation and demonstration of validated and tested products at the local level. This provision gave vocational education research and development another dimension and tended to reinforce the congressional thrust toward applied and action oriented acitivities.

3. Under Part I for curriculum development, the U.S. Commissioner of Education received funds that could be used as discretionary funds for priority projects of national significance. All Part I funds, except those used to support the development and operation of the six regional curriculum coordination centers of the National Curriculum Coordination Network, were used for USOE-initiated curriculum development thrusts which focused on national vocational education priority areas. Prior to 1976, states wishing to do curriculum development had to rely heavily on the use of Part B funds for general distribution or Part C research funds for curriculum development activities.

As early as 1969, the Illinois Division of Adult, Vocational, and Technical Education (DAVTE) considered curriculum and personnel development to be major state level priorities. As a result, both functions were emphasized by establishing a separate professional and curriculum development section for the management of all curriculum and professional development activities. The trend toward applied research and curriculum development, combined with planned dissemination techniques, was becoming even more visible and evident within Illinois as well as in several other states. The trend toward operating all components of the research and development function as a program improvement concept was beginning to emerge but was not yet formulated. The idea that was beginning to unfold was that of using research as a planning and design base for program and/or curriculum development followed by a comprehensive process for diffusion. Later influences, such as a review of vocational education research and development by the Committee on Vocational Education Research and Development (COVERD), would cause this idea to be molded into a unified program improvement continuum and to be included through consolidation of functions within the Education Amendments of 1976.

D. COVERD Influences on Vocational Education Research and Development

In anticipation of the Education Amendments of 1976, a major two-year study was initiated by the Bureau of Occupational and Adult Education to examine the total spectrum of vocational education research and development. The study was conducted by the National Academy of Science through its Committee on Vocational Education Research and Development (COVERD). COVERD defined vocational education research to include Part C - Research Programs (state and federal shares), Part D - Exemplary and Innovative Programs (state and federal shares), and Part I - Curriculum Development (federal shares only) of the 1968 Amendments to the Vocational Education Act of 1963 as well as Section 4(c) of the 1963 Vocational Education Act.

Vocational education research and development received much attention during the two-year reauthorization cycle that eventually resulted in the Education Amendments of 1976 (P.L. 94-482). Many research and development managers reacted defensively to the COVERD report. While the COVERD report has been openly criticized for some inherent weaknesses in research design and methodology, the findings and conclusions were considered by many vocational educators to be relevant and on target and to have adequately addressed the legislative changes needed for improvement of vocational education research and development. Within this context, COVERD evidently presented at least four major themes with which Congress concurred in preparing the two bills which ultimately became P.L. 94-482. Those themes should be brought to the attention of and should serve as a foundation for those persons responsible for the design and operation of a comprehensive delivery system for vocational education program improvement at the state level. The four themes are as follows:

1. COVERD indicated that vocational education research and development activities (Part C, Part D, and Part I) for the most part, had been conducted in isolation with very little, if any, articulation and coordination within and among the program/line item parts. COVERD recommended that these three line items be consolidated into one title in the new legislation. It was strongly implied that all activities conducted under the program improvement umbrella should follow a continuum from RESEARCH through DEVELOPMENT through DIFFUSION. COVERD further suggested that these elements should be coordinated through a comprehensive planning and management system at both the state and federal level. This point should be considered very seriously since the language of the five provisions for research in the 1968 Amendments had already placed primary emphasis on applied research and implementation as opposed to the conduct of research only. In other words, the law implied that what is done in vocational education research and development at the state level should have ultimate application at the local level in terms of improved programs and/or supportive services. This one finding has been credited with causing Congress to consolidate vocational education research, curriculum development, exemplary and innovative programs, and personnel development functions under one block of the present legislation. The message is that a state's approach should be comprehensive and should follow a continuum from research and planning through development, field testing, and diffussion. There should be a strong reliance upon demonstration, inservice, and preservice as vehicles for diffusion.

2. COVERD found adequate visible evidence to support the contention that research and development activities had had some impact upon vocational education. However, research managers were unable to provide documented evidence of impact. The COVERD report stated $250,000,000 expended over a ten year period was without documented results of impact. Even though COVERD used the most restrictive definition of impact, which is measurement of change at the student level, the committee strongly recommended that systematic dissemination, evaluation, and documentation be a major part of any future vocational education research and development system. In short, product and process evaluations were found to be practically nonexistent in vocational education research and development.

3. COVERD concluded that, for the most part, previous vocational research and development activities had not been based on valid long range priorities. This finding

is more applicable to research activities supported from the federal level than those activities conducted by or supported from the state level. COVERD recommended that the Bureau of Occupational and Adult Education, as well as all state research coordinating units, devise systematic approaches for the identification and development of priorities. It was suggested that all activities conducted internally or funded externally by either agency be based on sound priorities resulting from comprehensive planning conducted over a substantial period of time.

4. COVERD found that many different types of activities had been conducted under vocational education research and development ranging from the production, implementation, and operation of sophisticated management information systems to the provision of $71,000,000 for initial support of the career education movement in this country. The report further noted that research and development activities had ranged from basic research to highly practical activities for classroom use. COVERD recommended a combination of activities at both ends of the spectrum with a strong emphasis on the development of curriculum materials and instructional techniques that would impact significantly on the classroom or other learning situations.

Inasmuch as the COVERD Report was not released until after the first versions of the Pell and Perkins Bills were at the House and Senate compromise conference stage of the legislative amendment process of the Vocational Education Act of 1963, it is not clear how much, if at all, the report influenced the language of the final version of the Education Amendments of 1976. The compromise version of the two bills pertaining to the research and development program improvement and supportive service functions contained evidence of a high degree of correlation with at least ten of the COVERD conclusions and recommendations. This section was enacted into law under Subpart 3 - Program Improvement and Supportive Services; Part A - State Level Programs, Title II - Vocational Education and Subpart 2 - Program Improvement and Supportive Services, Part B - National Program, Title II - Vocational

Education, Education Amendments of 1976 (P.L. 94-482). Key COVERD recommendations that went unheeded centered around the issues of providing specific set asides for conducting basic research and field initiated research activities.

E. Key Provisions of Subpart 3 - Program Improvement and Supportive Services, Title II - Vocational Education P.L. 94-482

Authorization of Grants and Uses of Funds

> Sec. 130. (a) From the sums made available for grants under this subpart pursuant to section 103 the Commissioner is authorized to make grants to States to assist them in improving their vocational education programs and in providing supportive services for such programs in accordance with the provisions of this subpart.
> (b) Grants to States under this subpart may be used, in accordance with five-year State plans, and annual program plans approved pursuant to section 109, for the following purposes:
> (1) research programs as described in section 131;
> (2) exemplary and innovative programs as described in section 132;
> (3) curriculum development programs as described in section 133;
> (4) provision of guidance and counseling services, programs, and activities as described in section 134;
> (5) provision of pre-service and in-service training as described in section 135; and
> (6) grants to overcome sex bias as described in section 136. (90 STAT. 2191)

Section 130 supplies the general provisions for Subpart 3. It spells out the six programs that are eligible for funding. Most of the key elements that are important to this paper are contained in Section 131 - P.L. 94-482 and paragraphs 104.702, 104.703, and 104.704 of the Rules and Regulations for Implementation of Title II - Vocational Education of P.L. 94-482. All of these provisions will be discussed in detail over the next few pages. Even though

Sections 132 - 136 of P.L. 94-482 are important to the RCU function, they will not be treated in detail at this point. Elements of these sections will be addressed as they pertain to other parts of the paper.

Research

> Sec. 131. (a) Funds available to the States under Section 130 (a) may be used for support of State research coordination units and for contracts by those units pursuant to comprehensive plans of program improvement involving -
>
> (1) applied research and development in vocational education;
>
> (2) experimental, developmental, and pilot programs and projects designed to test the effectiveness of research findings, including programs and projects to overcome problems of sex bias and sex stereotyping; (emphasis added)
>
> (3) improved curriculum materials for presently funded programs in vocational education and new curriculum materials for new and emerging job fields, including a review and revision of any curricula developed under this section to insure that such curricula do not reflect stereotypes based on sex, race, or national origin; (emphasis added)
>
> (4) projects in the development of new careers and occupations such as
>
> (A) research and experimental projects designed to identify new careers in such fields as mental and physical health, crime prevention and correction, welfare, education, municipal services, child care, and recreation, requiring less training than professional positions, and to delineate within such career roles with the potential for advancement from one level to another;
>
> (B) training and development projects designed to demonstrate improved methods of securing the involvement, cooperation, and commitment of both the public and private sectors toward the end of achieving greater coordination and more effective implementation of programs for the employment of persons in the fields described in subparagraph (A), including programs

to prepare professionals (including administrators) to work effectively with aides; and

(C) projects to evaluate the operation of programs for the training, development, and utilization of public service aides, particularly their effectiveness in providing satisfactory work experiences and in meeting public needs; and

(5) dissemination of the results of the contracts made pursuant to paragraphs (1) through (4), including employment of persons to act as disseminators, on a local level, of these results.

(b) No contract shall be made pursuant to subsection (a) unless the applicant can demonstrate a reasonable probability that the contract will result in improved teaching techniques or curriculum materials that will be used in a substantial number of classrooms or other learning situations within five years after the termination date of such contract. (emphasis added) (90 STAT. 2191-2192)

The critical points for implementation are contained in the rules and regulations which are highlighted on pages 19 and 20. There are some very important points related to the use of funds which should be emphasized. A broad interpretation of key provisions under Section 131 would allow a state to conduct everything detailed in Sections 132 - 136. This is not to say that the other sections are not important and not necessary. However, if the managers of the research and development function in past years had applied a more liberal interpretation to the provisions and had more fully implemented Part C of the 1968 Amendments, the 1976 Amendments would not need the emphasis and definition provided by Sections 132 - 136. The response often given to this argument is that Part C did not allow these things because it was drastically changed in 1976. It is argued that research meant the basic, pure, statistical, evaluative, and assessment type research. This contention can be easily refuted by comparing the language of the two documents. For the convenience of the reader all new words included in the 1976 Amendments that were not in the 1968 Amendments have been underlined on pages 13 and 14.

Given this comparison, it can be concluded that the five main provisions did, without question, place the major emphasis on a comprehensive applied research and development program rather than on research alone. A close examination reveals that the only changes in the key provisions were the addition of two phrases that emphasize sex equity, the provision for "hiring of disseminators at the local level," and the much-discussed utilization, or impact, paragraph.

It must be concluded that the emphasis of the 1968 Amendments centered around the areas of applied research and development, evaluation, field testing, demonstration of innovative programs, development of curriculum, training of personnel to use materials and concepts, and the dissemination or products. In implementing the 1968 Amendments, it appears that many RCU directors failed to read, or chose to ignore, most of what was written beyond the first provision. RCU directors apparently limited their thrust to narrow inquiry and information analysis activities. These points are not made to pit development or applied research against basic research, but to illustrate the need for vision and insight in terms of what is intended.

The most complicating factor in attempting to implement the provisions of the 1976 Amendments is the apparent contradiction within Section 131, specifically the second paragraph concerning product utilization within five years after a contract's termination date. Section 131 (a), given broad interpretation, allows a state to do a variety of activities in the applied research, development, and diffusion context. Yet Section 131 (b) has the effect of drastically limiting what can be done primarily to the development of curriculum and instructional materials. The statement calling for impact is ambigious and is not adequately defined in the Act or in the rules and regulations. What do phrases such as "demonstrate a reasonable probability," "significant impact," and "substantial number of classrooms or learning situations" mean to a person charged with the implementation of a program or documentation of its outcome.

The author offers the following interpretations concerning this paragraph. The author presents these observations after reviewing congressional testimony and after providing verbal and written testimony to the COVERD hearings.

1. The impact statement seems to indicate that activities funded as a research or curriculum development program improvement activity by a state or federal agency should result in a product or service that can be applied or used to improve the teaching and learning situation in vocational education preparation programs at the secondary and postsecondary levels. Products and services that can be used to upgrade such personnel as administrators, counselors, and teachers, and that provide for better curriculum guides and materials for classroom management are included in this inference. The statement includes the development of student materials where applicable. It includes the conduct of the research necessary to determine the need for such activities and the effectiveness or impact of any product or service provided as an outcome.

2. If the above statement is accepted as a valid analysis, the research and development manager must do a better job of field testing and/or validating any procedure, product, and/or service provided and developed prior to, during, and after implementation to insure continuous improvement of the total delivery system.

3. Given 1 and 2 above, the research and development manager must have a comprehensive diffusion system in place which integrates all forms of dissemination of materials, demonstration of innovative practices, inservice for personnel already in the system, and preservice for those preparing to enter the system. This diffusion system must include the techniques and processes necessary to insure that the intended impact is achieved and documented both initially and long range. This concept is either nonexistent or weak in the vocational education research and development system of most states. There is very little evidence to support the contention that a system is presently in the field that can deliver the type of impact data necessary to satisfy Congress.

Rules and Regulations for Implementing Sections 131, 132, and 133

Prior to studying paragraphs 104.702, 104.703, and 104.704 in their entirety, there are several key points that need to be established and emphasized. The word "and" between "Program Improvement and Supportive Services" in the title of Subpart 3 is a very important conjunction. It joins two terms that have different meanings and that mandate different methods for state level expenditures of funds. Program improvement is defined to include Section 131 - Research, Section 132 - Exemplary and Innovative Programs, and Section 133 - Curriculum Development activities. These three areas are to be coordinated through the state research coordinating unit and operated according to a comprehensive plan for program improvement based on priorities identified by the state. Activities supported by the RCU can be accomplished either internally by staff and/or conducted externally through contracts.

Supportive services, on the other hand, include Section 134 - Vocational Guidance and Counseling, Section 135 - Vocational Education Personnel Training, and Section 136 - Grants to Assist in Overcoming Sex Bias. These three supportive services sections are somewhat related to each other but they are not interfaced nor are they to be coordinated by the RCU unless a state so chooses. With the exception of guidance and counseling, a good rationale can be established for including personnel development and sex bias grants under the management context of the RCU. This arrangement is especially valid if the state believes in a comprehensive program improvement function and if it operates these areas through a competitive funding process. If guidance and counseling takes on personnel development as its primary focus (as opposed to direct services for students), it can also be tied into a comprehensive program improvement continuum. When reading the following provisions, remember that they apply only to program improvement activities as defined in the rules and regulations to include research, exemplary and innovative programs, and curriculum development. Also keep in mind that the phrase "coordinate by the RCU" does not necessarily mean, nor does it dictate, that all program improvement functions be physically located or administered within the RCU as a single administrative unit. Rather it implies that the comprehensive plan for program improvement should tie these functions together based on a conceptual framework that allows each function to build upon and support the other.

Program Improvement

104.702 Purpose

The purpose of program improvement is to improve vocational education by the support of research programs, exemplary and innovative programs, and curriculum development programs.

104.703 Research Coordinating Unit

(a) In order to expend funds for program improvement, the State shall establish a research coordinating unit to coordinate the research, exemplary and innovative programs, and curriculum development activities in the State.

(b) The State shall set forth the organizational structure of this research coordinating unit in the five-year State plan.

(c) The State shall develop a comprehensive plan of program improvement which includes:

  (1) The intended uses of funds available under section 130 of the Act to support activities of program improvement;

  (2) A description of the State's priorities for program improvement; and

  (3) The procedures to be used by the research coordinating unit to insure that the findings and results of the program improvement activities in the State are disseminated throughout the State in a coordinated fashion.

(d) The State shall include the comprehensive plan of program improvement in the five-year State plan and annual program plan.

(e) The research coordinating unit shall submit to the Commissioner and to the National Center for Research in Vocational Education the following:

  (1) Two copies of an abstract of each approved project for program improvement, within 30 calendar days after approval of the project, containing the source and amount of funds obligated for the project; and

  (2) Two copies of the final report resulting from the State project, within three months after the ending date of the project.

(f) The research coordinating unit may use funds available under section 130 of the Act for the purposes set forth in 104.705, 104.706, and 104.708. This unit may contract for the performance of activities described in 104.705, 104.706, and 104.708, or this

> unit may perform the activities set forth in 104.705, using its own staff. The cost of the professional and support staff of the research coordinating unit is supportable with Federal funds available under section 130 of the Act.
>
> (Implements Secs. 130, 131, 132, 133, 171; 20 U.S.C 2350 through 2353, 2401; H.R. Rept. 94-1085, p. 44; H.R. Rept. 94-1701, pp. 225-226.)

104.704 Contract Requirements

> No contract shall be made pursuant to 104.705 and 104.708 unless the applicant can demonstrate a reasonable probability that the contract will result in improved teaching techniques or curriculum materials that will be used in a substantial number of classrooms or other learning situations within five years after the termination date of such contracts.

What has been discussed and stressed thus far has been presented from an objective base. The statements can be supported by interpreting present legislation, by studying directives contained in the rules and regulations, and by reviewing current literature. Although it is desirable to have a sound information base when conducting research, the information base alone does not provide an adequate understanding of organization and management of the function at the state level or about the manner by which a state RCU chooses to organize, operate, and manage its comprehensive program improvement function. Perhaps the best way to describe a successful system is to provide a snapshot of a real life example caught at a given point in time. This is the intent of the next chapter.

II. ILLINOIS: A PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT RESPONSE FROM ONE STATE

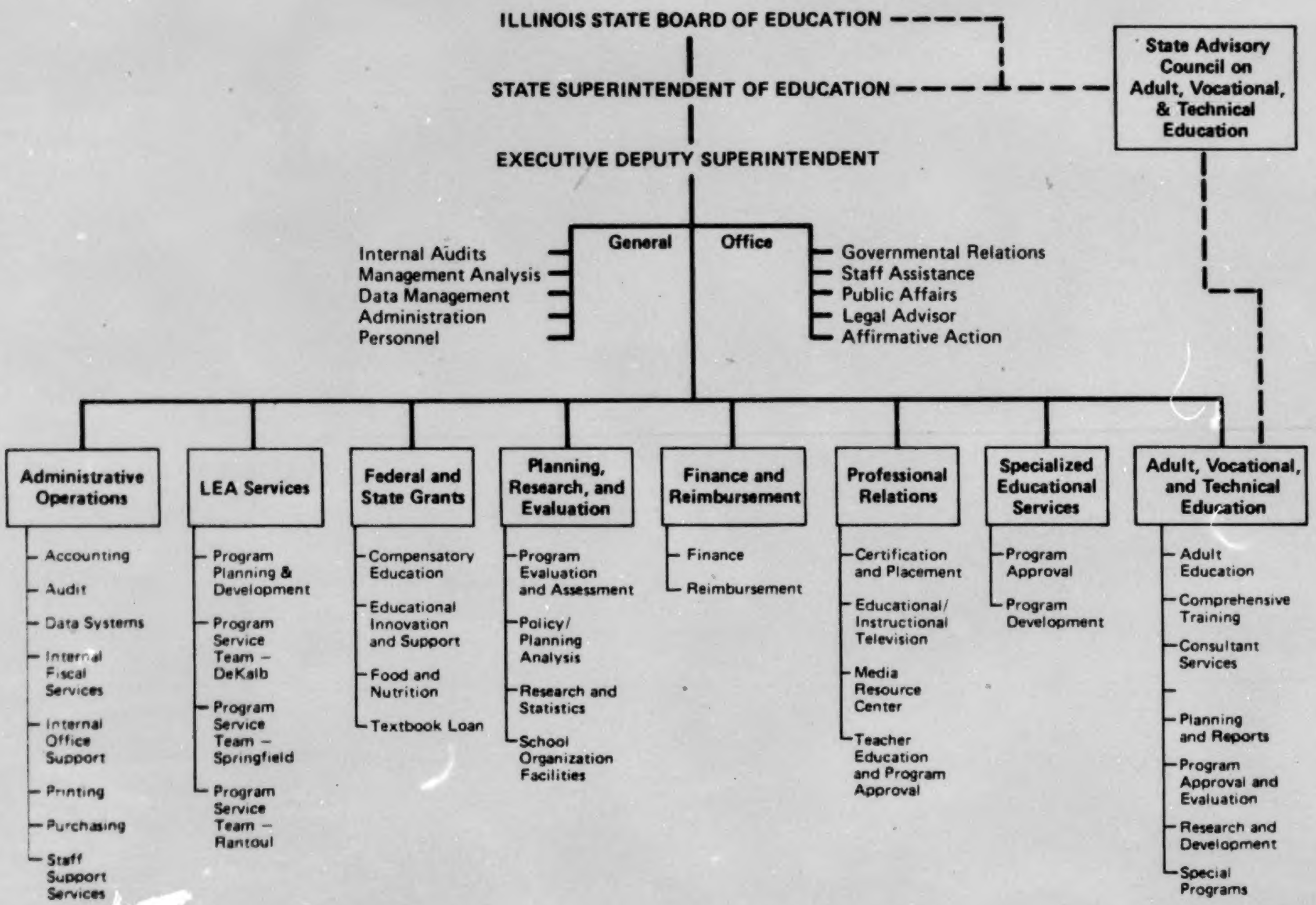
A. Illinois State Board of Education

The Illinois State Board of Education is responsible for all policy development and state level administration related to preschool education, K-12 education, and career and vocational education. The Illinois State Board of Education is organized as shown in figure 1 on page 22 to accomplish its legislative and constitutional mandates.

The State Board of Education is solely and legally responsible for policy determination and state level administration of vocational education in Illinois. The Department of Adult, Vocational and Technical Education (DAVTE) is responsible for carrying out its functions as determined by the State Board, the Illinois General Assembly, and as provided in P.L. 94-482. The State Advisory Council for Adult, Vocational, and Technical Education serves in an advisory and evaluative capacity to the State Board of Education and to the Department of Adult, Vocational, and Technical Education in all manners that pertain to career education, adult education, and vocational and technical education.

The Illinois Board of Higher Education is responsible for the coordination of two year postsecondary, community and junior colleges, four year colleges, and university education. By state

FIGURE 1.
Administrative Organization
of the Illinois State Board of Education


ILLINOIS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION
EXECUTIVE DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT
State Advisory Council on Adult, Vocational, & Technical Education
General Office
Internal Audits
Management Analysis
Data Management
Administration
Personnel
Governmental Relations
Staff Assistance
Public Affairs
Legal Advisor
Affirmative Action
Administrative Operations
Accounting
Audit
Data Systems
Internal Fiscal Services
Internal Office Support
Printing
Purchasing
Staff Support Services
LEA Services
Program Planning & Development
Program Service Team – DeKalb
Program Service Team – Springfield
Program Service Team – Rantoul
Federal and State Grants
Compensatory Education
Educational Innovation and Support
Food and Nutrition
Textbook Loan
Planning, Research, and Evaluation
Program Evaluation and Assessment
Policy/Planning Analysis
Research and Statistics
School Organization Facilities
Finance and Reimbursement
Finance
Reimbursement
Professional Relations
Certification and Placement
Educational/Instructional Television
Media Resource Center
Teacher Education and Program Approval
Specialized Educational Services
Program Approval
Program Development
Adult, Vocational, and Technical Education
Adult Education
Comprehensive Training
Consultant Services
Planning and Reports
Program Approval and Evaluation
Research and Development
Special Programs

statute and constitutional provision, three members from the State Board of Education and three members from the Board of Higher Education form a committee that coordinates vocational education functions among the four levels (elementary, secondary, postsecondary, and university) represented by the two boards.

The Illinois Community College Board, which is subordinate to the Board of Higher Education, is responsible for community college programs (grade 13-14). It has operational authority for all programs, including vocational and technical education, that are operated within the public junior college system in Illinois. The Department of Adult, Vocational, and Technical Education provides direct funding for community college vocational and technical programs through the one and five year plan process. Although this dual board system does necessitate coordination, the State Board of Education is the sole state agency responsible for approval and support of all vocational programs supported from P.L. 94-482.

B. Department of Adult, Vocational, and Technical Education

The Department of Adult, Vocational, and Technical Education (DAVTE) is one of ten departments within the Illinois State Board of Education (see figure 1, page 22). The department administers federal and state funds designated to provide all citizens with educational opportunities in (1) vocational and technical education, (2) career education, (3) adult education, and (4) training under the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA).

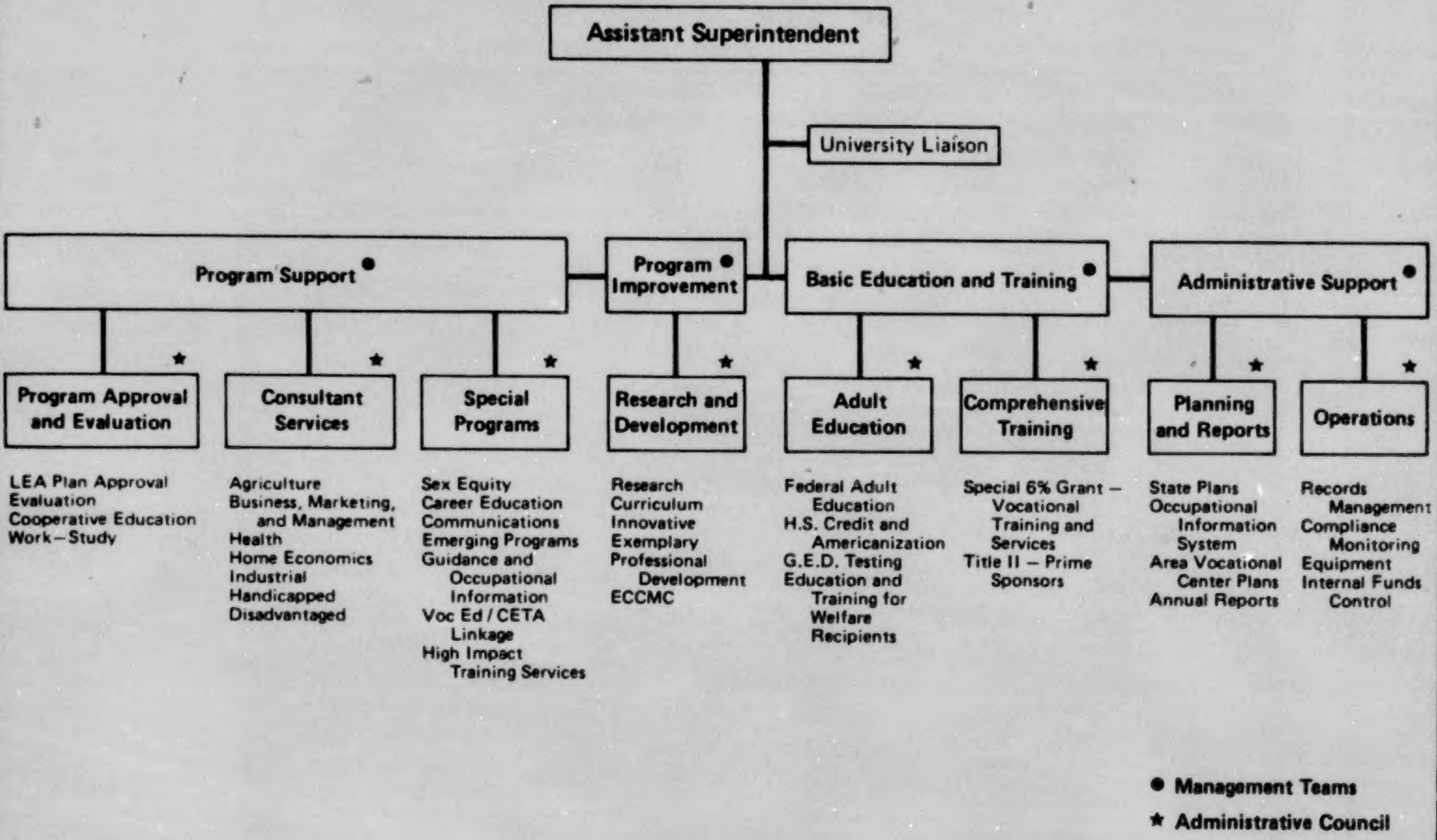
The department is divided into eight sections (see figure 2, page 25) which are grouped into four management teams called Program Support, Program Improvement, Basic Education and Training, and Administrative Support. The department is somewhat unique in that its eight operational sections are organized around a functional base that can be tied directly to legislative functions and purposes.

In contrast, many state departments are still organized around a traditional program base. The Illinois Department of Adult, Vocational, and Technical Education perceives itself as providing leadership and service functions as opposed to a primarily regulatory function. Obviously, it does perform some regulatory functions, but such activities are conducted under an "assistance to local agency" philosophy as opposed to a "big brother" syndrome.

In the following pages, the eight sections are described in detail to give the reader a perspective of the organizational context of the Illinois RCU within the Department of Adult, Vocational, and Technical Education. Following the description of each is a summary of the methods used by the Research and Development Section to coordinate with the seven other sections and with the other departments. Once the description of each section and the interrelationships have been delineated, a detailed description of the total Program Improvement and Supportive

FIGURE 2.

Administrative Organization
of the Illinois Department of
Adult, Vocational, and Technical Education


Assistant Superintendent
University Liaison
Program Support ●
Program Improvement ●
Basic Education and Training ●
Administrative Support ●
Program Approval and Evaluation ★
Consultant Services ★
Special Programs ★
Research and Development ★
Adult Education ★
Comprehensive Training ★
Planning and Reports ★
Operations ★
LEA Plan Approval
Evaluation
Cooperative Education
Work–Study
Agriculture
Business, Marketing, and Management
Health
Home Economics
Industrial
Handicapped
Disadvantaged
Sex Equity
Career Education
Communications
Emerging Programs
Guidance and Occupational Information
Voc Ed / CETA Linkage
High Impact Training Services
Research
Curriculum
Innovative
Exemplary
Professional Development
ECCMC
Federal Adult Education
H.S. Credit and Americanization
G.E.D. Testing
Education and Training for Welfare Recipients
Special 6% Grant – Vocational Training and Services
Title II – Prime Sponsors
State Plans
Occupational Information System
Area Vocational Center Plans
Annual Reports
Records Management
Compliance Monitoring
Equipment
Internal Funds Control
● Management Teams
★ Administrative Council

Service/Research and Development Section will be provided. The program improvement function within the Research and Development Section is an integral part of the vocational education system in Illinois. It is not a separate function.

(The following section descriptions have been taken from a public relations brochure developed by the Department of Adult, Vocational, and Technical Education, Illinois State Board of Education, Springfield, Illinois.)

Research and Development Section/Program Improvement Team

The Research and Development Section's major mission is to improve the quality and expand the scope of public vocational and technical education in Illinois through the development and improvement of vocational education concepts, materials, and personnel. This is accomplished through systematic planning, management, and dissemination of program improvement activities via contracts for research; exemplary and innovative programs; curriculum and personnel development activities; and grants for elimination of sex bias. This section

- Serves as the research coordinating unit for the planning and management of program improvement activities as defined in P.L. 94-482.
- Provides research, development, and diffusion of new and innovative approaches to the delivery of vocational education.
- Provides for the research, development, and diffusion of competency-based curricular products.

- Provides a personnel development capability to support preservice and inservice education, regular and short-term institutes, and industry/education exchange programs. These support services are also provided to improve the quality of vocational education for persons who are disadvantaged, handicapped, or have limited English-speaking ability, and to overcome sex bias and sex role stereotyping.
- Provides for the local, state, regional, and national dissemination and diffusion of all applicable concepts and products through the section and the East Central Curriculum Management Center.
- Provides for the management and coordination of federal contracts and grants awarded to the section.
- Provides consultative services and technical assistance to local educational agencies in the preparation and submission of contract and grant proposals to the State Board and the U. S. Office of Education.

Not many days pass without someone asking, "Why isn't the Research and Development Section a part of the Department of Planning, Research, and Evaluation?" This question has been raised by at least two management consultant firms charged with reviewing the board's structure. The answer is simple. The purpose of the Department of Planning, Research, and Evaluation is that of institutional research, evaluation, and planning for the State Board of Education. Specifically, it provides supportive statistical information, program evaluation, planning and policy analysis, and research and recommendations to the Illinois State Board of Education, to the State Superintendent of Education, and to local educational agencies.

The Research and Development Section of the Department of Adult, Vocational, and Technical Education is an applied function. It directs most of its resources toward the improvement of programs, materials, and personnel at the local level. It limits its activities to vocational and technical education and is an integral part of the vocational education system in Illinois. It does not participate in statistical, evaluative, and planning activities unless the activities are in direct support of a department function or a particular research and development project in progress.

The Research and Development Section coordinates its activities with two of the four sections in the Department of Planning, Research, and Evaluation. The two sections sponsor joint research projects where appropriate. The Research and Development Section works with the Policy Planning Analysis Section when policy or planning activities are being prepared for presentation to the State Board. In certain cases the Program Evaluation and Assessment Section gets involved in third party evaluations of internally operated projects. All three sections participate in the Federal Programs Coordinating Council in its review of proposals submitted to agencies outside of Illinois.

The Research and Development Section works with the Department of Specialized Educational Services when projects involve the handicapped. Work is done with the Department of

Professional Relations when there are common concerns relative to teacher certification or the approval of new vocational and teacher education programs at the preservice level. Certain elements of the Department of Administrative Operations are very important to the section. The Internal Office Support Printing Section and Staff Support Services Section provide internal printing and word processing service. A closer linkage is being developed with the Program Service Teams in the LEA Services Department. The Program Service Teams have direct ties with local schools which are very important to the dissemination function of the Research and Development Section.

When an external proposal is prepared by any element of the board it must be reviewed twice by the Federal Programs Coordinating Committee. First, clearance to write the proposal must be obtained and secondly, final approval to submit the proposal must be granted before the superintendent will sign the transmittal forms. All survey forms administered by any element of the board must be cleared through the Data Coordination Board.

The Research and Development Section works closely with the State Advisory Council for Vocational Education (SACVE) in the research and evaluation of departmental functions and in the development of priorities for both the Department of Adult, Vocational, and Technical Education and the State Advisory Council to the program area of vocational education.

The specific areas of joint work effort include:

- Conducting joint informational meetings of the SACVE and the Research and Development Section.
- Soliciting SACVE input and analysis of annual priorities for program improvement.
- Facilitating SACVE involvement in the review of project proposals and reports.
- Fostering continued SACVE involvement in the University Occupational Education Coordinators Council.
- Encouraging joint developmental projects between the SACVE and the Research and Development Section.

In summary, the Research and Development Section is an integral program improvement and supportive service function of the vocational education system as operated in Illinois. It deals primarily in applied, developmental, and diffusion activities which are supportive to the department and to local schools. It has minimal involvement in institutional research for the State Board.

Planning and Reports Section/Administrative Support Team

The major responsibilities of the Planning and Reports Section include the review and approval of area vocational center plans, preparation of state plans and annual reports, and the operation of the occupational information system. The Planning and Reports Section provides administrative support to department activities by:

- Preparing and coordinating the development of state plans for vocational, adult, and career education.
- Developing and implementing an occupational information system to generate data for planning, reporting, evaluating, and managing occupational education programs and services at the state and local levels.
- Planning and implementing a system for area vocational center development to increase vocational education opportunities throughout the state.
- Preparing annual accountability reports to comply with federal and state mandates and other reports to assist in planning vocational education programs and services.
- Preparing and coordinating the development of state plans for vocational, adult, and career education.
- Analyzing and interpreting vocational and related legislation, rules and regulations and recommending DAVTE administrative policies, practices, and procedures to assure compliance.
- Providing consultative assistance and data for other sections and other board departments in the development of plans and reports to minimize duplication of effort and maximize the utilization of resources.

The Research and Development Section works closely with the Planning and Reports Section in several ways. Program improvement priorities become an integral part of the activities used to support goals and objectives in the state plan. The Research and Development Section provides a major portion of the impact information used by the Planning and Reports Section to prepare the annual accountability report. The Research and Development Section assists the Planning and Reports Section by funding selected projects that contribute to the data collection and reporting mission of the department. Coordination between the two sections occurs on those activities that deal with data collection to insure that duplication does not occur between internal on-going efforts and external contractually supported efforts.

Operations Section/Administrative Support Team

The major responsibilities of the Operations Section include records management, compliance monitoring, equipment monitoring, and internal funds control. The Operations Section insures the accountability of departmental appropriations and expenditures and provides data for reporting and planning of vocational education by accomplishing the following:

- Assists in budget preparation and distribution funds.
- Monitors local education agencies to assure compliance with state and federal rules and regulations.
- Compiles data for federal and state reports.
- Provides assistance in records management for the Department of Adult, Vocational, and Technical Education.
- Approves and monitors equipment inventories in accordance with state and federal legislative mandates.

The Research and Development Section interfaces with the Operations Section in all aspects related to the reimbursement of contracts and the auditing of project accounts. The Research and Development Section provides the Operations Section with its annual budget which is then consolidated with budgets from other sections to form the departmental budget. The Operations Section handles all financial transactions relative to internal staffing and personnel transactions.

Adult Education Section/Basic Education and Training Team

Major programs of the Adult Education Section include federal adult education, high school credit and Americanization, General Education Development (GED) testing, and education and training for welfare recipients. The Adult Education Section works in concert with local educational agencies to offer educational programs for adults and has assigned professional staff members to various regions throughout the state who are responsible for:

- Providing assistance to public schools and community colleges in planning for adult education programs.
- Providing emphasis and direction for the development of staff to appropriately serve the needs of the adult population.
- Providing for the design of special demonstration projects relating to the adult education programs and to monitor the special projects.
- Providing for the evaluation of proposals to conduct adult education programs and to monitor the programs after approval.
- Providing services and direction to the regional superintendent of schools for coordination and administration of the GED testing program.

The Research and Development Section coordinates with the Adult Education Section to insure that there is no duplication between activities funded from the two federal acts for support and operation of adult education and vocational education. Since the Adult Education Section deals primarily with programs equivalent to less than high school or with GED, coordination efforts are centered around the vocational education elements that are noncredit.

Comprehensive Training Section/Basic Education and Training Team

The Comprehensive Training Section administers funds authorized by the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) to provide financial assistance, vocational training, programs, and services to CETA clients. Acting on behalf of the State Board of Education, this section enters into nonfinancial agreements with prime sponsors to:

- Maintain, extend, and improve existing CETA skill training programs and services for each prime sponsor.
- Develop new programs and services which are suited to the needs of clients in the prime sponsor's area.
- Provide technical assistance in program planning, monitoring, and evaluation as requested by the prime sponsor.

The Research and Development Section coordinates with the Comprehensive Training Section in those areas related to CETA-vocational education linkages. The staff of the two sections have worked together to prepare proposals and to monitor projects of common interest.

Consultant Services Section/Program Support Team

Through the Consultant Services Section, consultative services are provided in agriculture, business, marketing and management, health, home economics, industrial oriented occupations, and handicapped and disadvantaged students. The consultants provide leadership to all agencies concerned with planning, developing, promoting, and implementing programs at all levels of vocational education. Staff in this section:

- Serve as resource specialists to interact with persons, agencies, associations, and organizations concerned with the attainment of optimum goals in vocational and related education programs.
- Extend and improve the quality of vocational education programs by providing consultant services to local education agencies in identifying, developing, implementing, and evaluating vocational education programs.
- Improve and extend vocational programs and supportive services for handicapped and disadvantaged persons including persons with limited English-speaking ability.
- Serve as resource specialists for all departments within the Illinois State Board of Education.

The Research and Development Section has the highest degree of interface with the Consultant Services Section since a major percentage of the program improvement activities fall into the broad categories of curriculum development or personnel development (both inservice and preservice) related to occupational programs offered in the local schools. The consultants assist with the (1) identification of priorities, (2) preparation of requests for proposals, (3) review of proposals, (4) monitoring of projects, and (5) carrying out the dissemination of program improvement concepts and products. Coordination with the occupational areas is very critical under the 1976 Amendments since the emphasis on impact places the major focus on curriculum and instructional materials. The consultants are not only internal program experts but are the linking agents with local vocational classrooms and as such are instrumental in the identification of innovative local school programs.

Program Approval and Evaluation Section/Program Support Team

The major programs of the Program Approval and Evaluation Section include local education agency plan approval, evaluation of local programs, cooperative education, and work-study programs. This section utilizes a systematized approval and evaluation process referred to as the Three Phase System for Statewide Evaluation of Occupational Education Programs. This system provides assistance to local education agency personnel in planning, developing, operating, and improving vocational education programs. As regional representatives, staff of the section are responsible for:

- Providing assistance to local education agencies in planning for annual and long-range occupational program development and improvement.
- Evaluating and recommending approval of the local education agency's One and Five Year Plan for Occupational Education.
- Providing for the improvement and accountability of the local agency's total vocational education programs through a state-coordinated system of on-site evaluations.

The Research and Development Section coordinates with the Program Approval and Evaluation Section in the key areas of priority determination and liaison with local level administrators. The Program Approval and Evaluation Section produces an annual report from its on-site evaluation visits to local school programs. This report provides one data source for the determination of priorities for program improvement. The Program

Approval and Evaluation Section also uses local evaluation team leaders as a source of information for specific recommendations on program improvement. The local one and five year program plan files are often used as a data base for selected types of research supported by the Research and Development Section. Regional vocational administrators who work out of the Program Approval and Evaluation Section also assist with program improvement activities by helping to identify and provide liaison with local schools that are willing to participate as demonstration or test sites for innovative program or curriculum development activities.

Special Programs Section/Program Support Team

The Special Programs Section administers specific programs that cross sectional lines, such as sex equity, career education, communications, emerging programs, and guidance and occupational information.

The Research and Development Section works closely with the sex equity administrator in the management and direction of the Section 136 grant activities related to the elimination of sex bias and sex role stereotyping. Coordination is also made with career education personnel and emerging occupations personnel. These two sections work closely on requests for proposal preparation and proposal evaluations. They also monitor several activities of common interest and responsibility.

III. RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT SECTION/ ILLINOIS RCU - A MODEL

Introduction

Pursuant to the rules and regulations governing the implementation of Subpart 3, Title II, Vocational Education P.L. 94-482 Education Amendments of 1976, the Illinois State Board of Education/Department of Adult, Vocational, and Technical Education has designated the Research and Development Section, in its State Plan for the Administration of Vocational Education in Illinois, as the organizational unit which fulfills the requirements of the legislative function as assigned to the research coordinating unit (RCU). The Research and Development Section is assigned the responsibility for the management and coordination of selected aspects of program improvement and supportive services as defined in the Act. These include the following:

1. Research (Section 131)
2. Exemplary and innovative programs (Section 132)
3. Curriculum development (Section 133)
4. Vocational education personnel training (Section 135)
5. Grants to assist in overcoming sex bias (Section 136)
6. Subpart 2 federal level activities affecting the state and liaison with national level activities

The Research and Development Section administers these activities with the other management teams of the department, institutions of higher education, postsecondary institutions, local educational agencies, and private education management and consultant firms. All activities are coordinated with the educational planning, policy, research, evaluation, federal programs administration, and data base management requirements of the Illinois State Board of Education.

One major point of contention raised by state directors of vocational education, state RCU directors, and other persons involved in program improvement activities is the degree of prescriptiveness which is included in present legislation. If a literal interpretation is applied to implementation rules and regulations for current vocational education legislation, it can be successfully argued that the language is overly prescriptive in its references to contracting and to the coordination of research, exemplary and innovative programs, and curriculum development through the research coordinating unit. Many state directors and RCU directors as well as other interested parties look at these provisions as mandates and in so doing, often overinterpret what is intended. Many argue that the rules and regulations absolutely require that research, exemplary and innovative programs, and curriculum development be put together in a single unit under a single administrator.

This is not what the law or the rules and regulations state. It was not the primary intent of Congress in passing the law.

The law uses the term "coordinate," and the intent of the language is coordination of activities for continuity of focus and direction of purpose. The primary vehicle for coordination is designated as the Comprehensive Plan for Program Improvement which is to be prepared by the RCU.

To illustrate this point, the Illinois Research and Development Section will be presented against a backdrop of each of the most commonly identified and most often cited legislative mandates. Potential alternatives that are permissible under the law will be provided. The underlying message is there must be a common philosophical or conceptual base before operational systems can be developed and implemented. In Illinois, the processes for management of program improvement are placed on a research-through-development-through-diffusion continuum rather than in separate unrelated categories of research, curriculum development, exemplary programs, personnel development, etc.

The rules and regulations specify that all activities conducted under Section 131 - Research, Section 132 - Exemplary and Innovative Programs, and Section 133 - Curriculum Development be coordinated by the research coordinating unit through a comprehensive plan for program improvement. Given an analysis of the COVERD report, a review of Congressional records containing testimony presented in oversight hearings, and an interpretation of the rules and regulations for implementation of Subpart 3, it can be assumed that there is to be a direct and interactive relationship between these elements. It can be inferred that a continuum should logically emerge that suggests that what is done under the umbrella of research should lead to or serve as a base for what is developed, whether it be a material or service outcome. What is developed should serve as the element for what is demonstrated, disseminated, and/or implemented in the field. Given the implications in the legislative language about product utilization, it can be said that an applied program improvement system should have direct linkages established from the time priorities are identified until the product or service has caused a change in the local setting.

In arriving at the continuum of research leading to development leading to diffusion, Illinois has come to recognize that personal communication is one of the most powerful diffusion vehicles, whether it is operated through an inservice or preservice model. Based on this belief, Illinois has chosen to make personnel development a part of its total operational concept of a comprehensive model for program improvement.

In adddition, Illinois has further defined program improvement as being all activities that are involved in the identification, development, and delivery of a concept or service to the local system and continuing through the mythical point of institutionalization in the local setting. Once concept implementation has occurred, the program or element is assumed to be operationally established in a local system or other appropriate entity through a normal funding, support, and/or operational mechanism. This concept can be applied at the university level in the development of program models for personnel development. The Illinois State Board of Education does not support the maintenance aspect of personnel development in teacher education. It supports those elements which build the university's capacity to develop personnel and includes teacher education program development and leadership development activities such as internships, fellowships, and exchanges.

This concept can be frustrating to operate but it does insure constant regeneration of the system and program continuation beyond the termination or removal of the program's source of funds. Too much of this nation's support for program improvement functions has been or is being used for program maintenance and operational support as opposed to upgrading the system or building capacity within the system. This issue provides one of the major reasons why impact has not been shown. Consequently, Congress has continued to frown upon requests for increased funding of program improvement activities.

The program improvement concept is a powerful concept. There are several national leaders who believe and profess that Congress intends for most of the future funding of vocational education to be used for program improvement purposes. These leaders believe that program improvement is the vehicle that should be used to achieve substantial increases in future legislative support for vocational education. The program improvement continuum can be applied to a state that has one project per year or to a state that has one hundred. It applies as well to an in-house operation as it does to a state in which everything is contracted externally. It is not dependent on dollars.

A. The Illinois Conceptual Model for Operation of Program Improvement Activities

Priority Development Phase

The Illinois model begins with the identification and refinement of program improvement priorities for the annual state plan. This review is accomplished by using several traditional as well as nontraditional methods of seeking and gathering input from external and internal agency sources. The key to past successes in priority setting efforts and project outcomes based on these priorities has been a reliance upon multiple sources of information and the recognition that a strict adherence to the research process may filter out innovative ideas that are offered by only one source. Persons responsible for priority identification should realize that the same ideas tend to resurface year after year since the least frequently suggested items tend to be eliminated first.

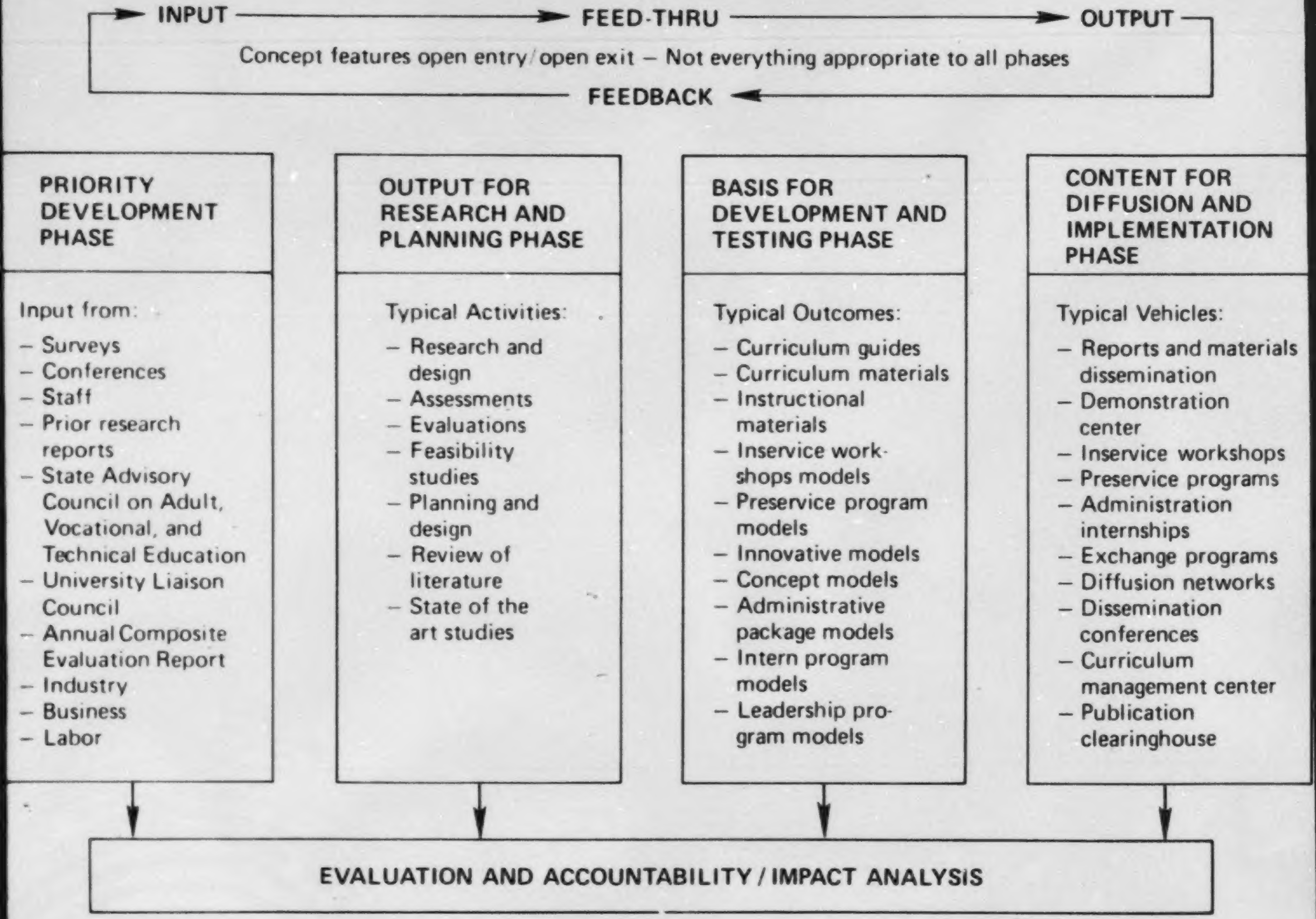
The Illinois RCU has been successful in priority identification and project operations because it has been allowed to exist in an administrative setting which encourages taking calculated risks. Not much can be accomplished in program improvement if only safe, validated ideas are considered for support. States must be prepared to take risks and realize that they will occasionally fail. Frequently, more can be learned from failure than from success.

Once priorities have been established, requests for proposals (RFPs) are prepared and issued. Once the proposals have been evaluated, the activities are conducted along the continuum presented in figure 3, page 45. Obviously, every single activity will not match this continuum from beginning to end. However, if a state uses a comprehensive model for program improvement, any activity can be plotted somewhere along the continuum at any given point in time. Furthermore, the continuum has certain output points that provide important feedback to the system which in turn produces the impetus for additional priority development.

Research and Planning Phase

This phase is used to document or verify the need for conducting the activity. Some documentation should occur in the priority setting stage, but there is a need for additional documentation before extensive research and developmental efforts are expended. This phase includes, but is not limited to, a

FIGURE 3
Program Improvement Continuum for a Vocational Education Research and Development Operation


INPUT
FEED-THRU
OUTPUT
Concept features open entry/open exit – Not everything appropriate to all phases
FEEDBACK
PRIORITY DEVELOPMENT PHASE
Input from:
– Surveys
– Conferences
– Staff
– Prior research reports
– State Advisory Council on Adult, Vocational, and Technical Education
– University Liaison Council
– Annual Composite Evaluation Report
– Industry
– Business
– Labor
OUTPUT FOR RESEARCH AND PLANNING PHASE
Typical Activities:
– Research and design
– Assessments
– Evaluations
– Feasibility studies
– Planning and design
– Review of literature
– State of the art studies
BASIS FOR DEVELOPMENT AND TESTING PHASE
Typical Outcomes:
– Curriculum guides
– Curriculum materials
– Instructional materials
– Inservice workshops models
– Preservice program models
– Innovative models
– Concept models
– Administrative package models
– Intern program models
– Leadership program models
CONTENT FOR DIFFUSION AND IMPLEMENTATION PHASE
Typical Vehicles:
– Reports and materials dissemination
– Demonstration center
– Inservice workshops
– Preservice programs
– Administration internships
– Exchange programs
– Diffusion networks
– Dissemination conferences
– Curriculum management center
– Publication clearinghouse
EVALUATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY/IMPACT ANALYSIS

review of relevant literature, an assessment of the state of the art for the topic under development, and other detailed planning and decision making necessary for conducting the subsequent phases of the activity. A "Go/No Go" decision point should be incorporated into this phase to provide for project termination.

A project may involve only an information gathering/analysis activity. In situations such as this, the development and testing phase can be bypassed and the project moved into the diffusion and implementation phase.

Development and Testing Phase

The third phase of the continuum, product and service testing, deals with the development and testing of concepts, models, materials, techniques, programs, and other demonstration and diffusion strategies necessary for product implementation. The Illinois plan includes curriculum and instructional material development as well as inservice and preservice program models in the development and testing phase. With the present legislative emphasis on applied activities that result in significant utilization at the local level, a state should expend a considerable amount of its effort in the development and testing phase. This phase should be the heart of the program if a state is serious about producing significant impact at the local level.

Diffusion and Implementation Phase

In the fourth phase of this continuum, all activities center around the actual diffusion and personnel development activities necessary to insure implementation of the practices and/or materials that were produced during the developmental and testing phase. Diffusion is the total process (e.g., demonstration, inservice, workshops) leading to the use of an innovation by a specified client group which is linked to a communication network and social system. Consequently, a total diffusion process must be considered as the climax to an effective program improvement continuum. Illinois uses every conceivable type of diffusion activity as vehicles for implementation at the local level. It also links closely with the East Central Curriculum Management Center and provides a publication clearinghouse for purchase of materials once the state has fulfilled its obligation for dissemination. It is believed that most newly developed materials and services that are developed for use in the local school should be disseminated through inservice, preservice, and/or demonstration activities. The Illinois RCU staff believes that the state has a responsibility to provide products at no cost to program participants. After adequate dissemination has been achieved, the state has the responsibility to provide a vehicle for purchase of materials. The point of adequate dissemination to the field must be determined on a project-by-project basis.

Assessment and Feedback

An assessment and feedback element occurs in each phase of the continuum. This element is accomplished through an extensive formative and summative evaluation plan which begins in the research phase and continues through the development/testing and diffusion/implementation phases. The purpose of this element is to document that each product has been utilized in a substantial number of classrooms or other learning situations within five years of the termination date of the project. The evaluation element also provides feedback to generate new or revised information for use in the priority development phase of the continuum.

This continuum can best be illustrated by providing an example of a project that has been developed along the lines of this model. Sex equity is a major emphasis and focus of the Education Amendments of 1976 (P.L. 94-482). It surfaced as a priority in surveys conducted by the Illinois RCU as early as 1972. Development of curriculum materials in sex equity in vocational education was proposed to the former State Board of Vocational Education and Rehabilitation in late 1972.

Following State Board approval of the priority, a request for proposal was issued. Following the receipt of several applications, Steiger, Fink and Smith, Inc. of McClean, Virginia (later Steiger, Fink and Koscoff, Inc. of Santa Monica, California) was chosen to conduct the activity. During year one, research was conducted which resulted in a report entitled Vocational Preparation for Women. This report was the basis for the design of the curriculum. Several of the findings and major recommendations of the report were used by Dr. Jo Ann Steiger in testimony at Congressional oversight hearings in preparation for the 1976 Amendments. This one report had immeasurable direct and significant impact upon the sex equity language which was incorporated into P.L. 94-482.

The second phase was initiated for the purpose of developing and field testing the curriculum which came to be known as Expanding Career Horizons. The final product was a kit which contained five units that could be integrated into any classroom situation from grades seven through fourteen.

As phase three began, a Part C proposal to the U. S. Office of Education resulted in a $72,552 grant to Illinois for final revision of the materials and selected dissemination activities in the field. Part of the grant was used for the production of a film entitled When I Grow Up, which was used as an introductory activity for the inservice workshops. (The film won a bronze medal for excellence at the 1977 New York Film and T.V. Festival.) As a result of this joint federal and state effort, more than 1,100 kits were disseminatd through inservice workshops to every local school district in Illinois.

In 1978, the National Center for Research in Vocational Education at the Ohio State University was charged with selecting six products for nationwide dissemination. The first product selected was Expanding Career Horizons. At least thirty-five other states have received the product at a national diffusion conference demonstration and at least twelve states have requested inservice workshops to be conducted in their state. The kit is currently being updated to reflect current statistical data and trends.

The Expanding Career Horizons sex equity project is but one example. No fewer than one hundred other projects could be cited as having similar results. This operational concept can be just as effectively demonstrated whether it is applied to personnel development or curriculum development. The secret to success is simple but the process is long. The process must start with an identified need, and proceed toward well-planned, long-range goals in a systematic manner. Documentation of the procedure and its results is essential if impact is to be verified and reported. The real advantage of this model is that it can be applied to any number of activities, from one to infinity.

Basis for Funding

From 1969-1976, the Illinois Research and Development Section and the former Professional and Curriculum Development Section of the Department of Adult, Vocational, and Technical Education operationalized and refined a conceptual approach for the management of the research and development function at the state level. This approach is now compatible with and comparable to what should result in every state given full implementation of the COVERD recommendations and full implementation of the state level provisions for management of program improvement and supportive services as specified in Subpart 3 of P.L. 94-482. However, further explanation in the areas of funding is needed.

The Vocational Education Title of the Education Amendments of 1976 specifies that 80 percent of the funds awarded to the state for vocational education be used as basic grants to vocational and technical education programs as outlined in Subpart 2. The remaining 20 percent is to be used for program improvement and supportive services as specified in Subpart 3. The Act further directs that a minimum of 20 percent of the program improvement and supportive services funds be used for Section 134, Vocational Guidance and Counseling, leaving the balance to be used at the discretion of the state in the five areas of research, exemplary and innovative programs, curriculum development, personnel development, and grants for the elimination of sex bias.

For example, Illinois received a FY 1979 federal allocation of approximately $26 million for vocational education as a result of P.L. 94-482 provisions. This represents approximately 5 percent of the funds distributed by the Bureau of Occupational and Adult Education/U. S. Office of Education to the states under the current legislative formula grant process. These funds are allocated as follows:

Illinois Share of P.L. 94-482 Funds for
Vocational Education - FY 1979

Subpart	Purpose	Amount
Subpart 2	Basic Grants	$18,600,000
Subpart 3	Program Improvement and Supportive Services	4,700,000
Subpart 4	Special Disadvantaged	900,000
Subpart 5	Consumer and Homemaking	1,700,000
		$25,900,000

Illinois also received $18,000,000 in FY 1978 and $26,700,000 in FY 1979 in state general revenue funds. It is all used in basic grants for local program operation. When the 20 percent minimum set-aside for guidance and counseling was applied to the Subpart 3 allocation, Illinois spent approximately $950,000 for Section 134 (Guidance and Counseling) functions (21 percent of the $4,700,000 for program improvement). This left $3.75 million for Sections 131, 132, 133, 135, and 136 activities. Given the 80-20 administrative split requirement under current rules and regulations, another $300,000 was subtracted which left $3.45 million for use in the five areas of research, exemplary programs, curriculum, personnel development, and grants for elimination of sex bias activities.

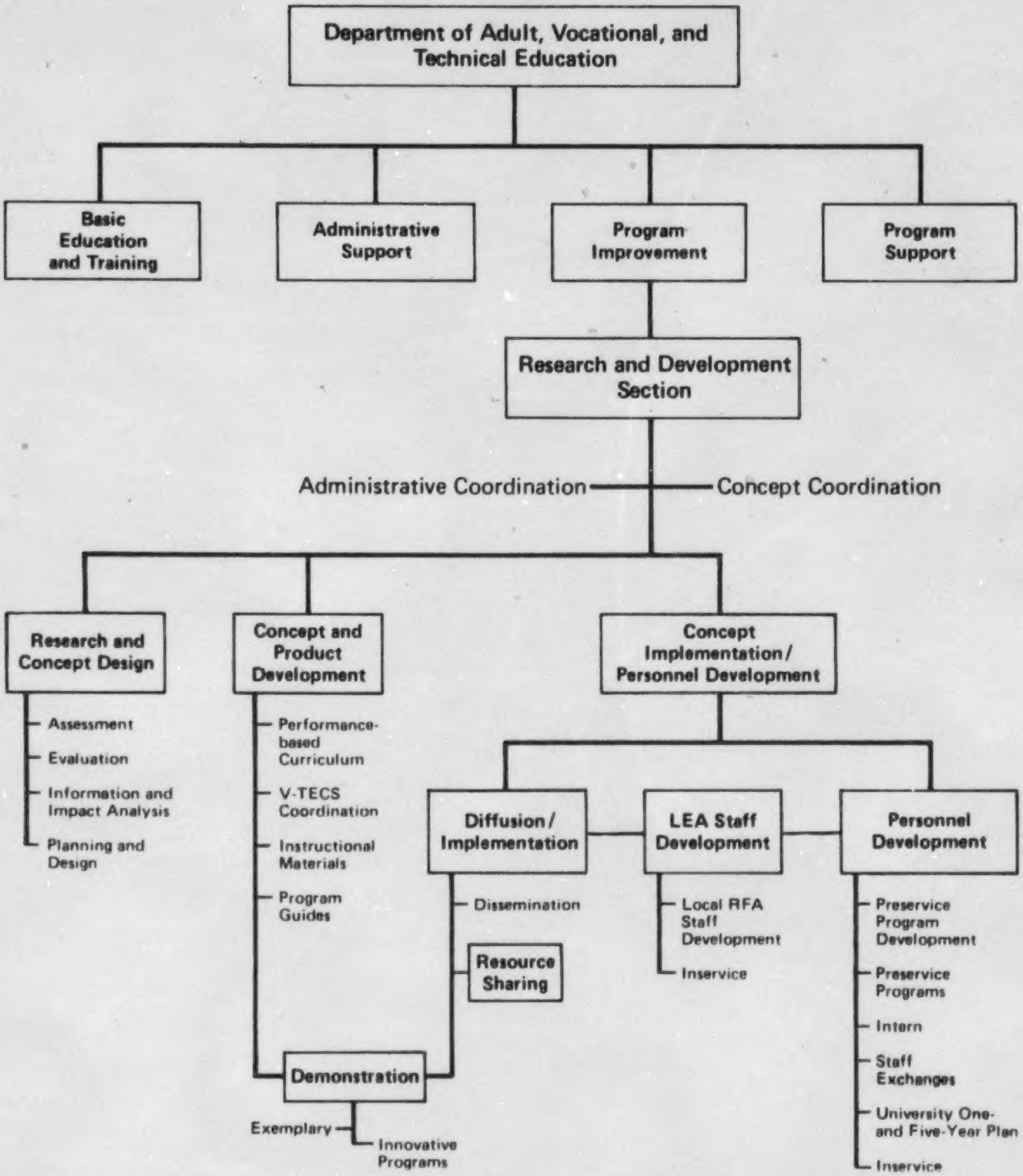
At this point it might be asked, "How much goes to each of these categories?" In Illinois, funds are assigned by priorities rather than by category. Given this context, the priority may be a research issue, a curriculum development need, or a dissemination activity. Illinois strongly believes that this was the intent of the legislation, and coordination and planning functions are the keys to success. Given an identified need, it is feasible and probable that the full developmental and implementation cycle may see a single priority carried through all phases of the program improvement continuum. As a result, an activity may proceed from research in phase 2, through curriculum development in phase 3, to demonstration/dissemination and/or personnel development in phase 4. A priority may be a single project or a total programmatic thrust depending on a state's approach.

B. Administrative Structure for the Research and Development Section/Illinois RCU

The rules and regulations for P.L. 94-482 require that each state present its administrative structure for the research coordinating unit as a part of its comprehensive plan for program improvement. The RCU is the only element of a state vocational education agency that is specifically mentioned in the legislation and required to be depicted in the annual state plan. The administrative chart for the Research and Development Section (Illinois RCU) is presented in figure 4, page 54. It should

FIGURE 4.

Administrative Organization
of the Illinois Research and Development Section


Department of Adult, Vocational, and Technical Education
Basic Education and Training
Administrative Support
Program Improvement
Program Support
Research and Development Section
Administrative Coordination
Concept Coordination
Research and Concept Design
Assessment
Evaluation
Information and Impact Analysis
Planning and Design
Concept and Product Development
Performance-based Curriculum
V-TECS Coordination
Instructional Materials
Program Guides
Demonstration
Exemplary
Innovative Programs
Concept Implementation/ Personnel Development
Diffusion/ Implementation
Dissemination
Resource Sharing
LEA Staff Development
Local RFA Staff Development
Inservice
Personnel Development
Preservice Program Development
Preservice Programs
Intern
Staff Exchanges
University One- and Five-Year Plan
Inservice

not be assumed that a staff person is assigned to each component of the chart because this arrangement would negate the operational philosophy of the umbrella concept of the program improvement continuum as described earlier. As other sections of the paper have stressed, this chart is a representation of the various types of activities or processes necessary to operate a comprehensive program improvement function rather than a categorical representation of traditional line item program designations.

The delineation of staff functions is probably the most important, yet the most difficult, element to comprehend when operating under this concept. The research and development staff person in Illinois should be described as a process facilitator/monitor/manager rather than a practicing researcher or curriculum developer. A staff person must have the typical research and development tools, but does not operate as a day-to-day practitioner. A staff person's major role is to facilitate the process and to coordinate all internal and external resources directed toward the operation of this function. Research and development skills are used for priority setting activities, coordination, planning, and project monitoring.

Personnel and Personnel Management

The Research and Development Section has two functions. One function involves program improvement and supportive services management and the other deals with operation of the East Central Curriculum Management Center (ECCMC). The staff of the Research and Development Section responsible for project management includes one manager, seven professional staff, and two operational personnel. The professional personnel are classified as contract administrators. Leadership and direction to all staff is provided by the section manager and the two contract administrator III personnel.

The manager is responsible to the state director (assistant superintendent) of the Department of Adult, Vocational, and Technical Education (DAVTE) for the recommendation of policy, coordination of program improvement activities, and overall administration and operation of the section, including the ECCMC. The manager serves as a liaison with the U. S. Office of Education, with other states, and with the National Center for Research in Vocational Education in all areas that are related to the program improvement function. The manager is also responsible for liaison with other elements of the State Board of Education and clients in the field.

The contract administrator IIIs are considered quasi-management positions. At the discretion and direction of the manager, these persons implement section policy and procedures, assist the manager in the coordination of program improvement activities, and carry a major portion of the administrative work load. One contract administrator III serves as the lead person for all staff charged with the research, curriculum development, exemplary programs, and personnel development project management functions. The other contract administrator III acts as the lead person in assisting the section manager in completing major administrative activities such as annual budget preparation, priority determination, RFP book preparation, publication preparation, and materials diffusion. All contract administrators facilitate, coordinate, and monitor the section program improvement activities through the priority setting, request for proposal, contract setting, and monitoring processes. The section funds more than 120 individual projects each year, resulting in an average per person work load of seventeen projects per year.

Within the Illinois Research and Development Section is an element that is somewhat unique to an RCU. It is the East Central Curriculum Management Center (ECCMC) which is the largest of the six curriculum centers sponsored by the U. S. Office of Education. The primary goal of ECCMC is the collection and dissemination of curriculum resources so that duplication can be reduced and developmental dollars can be more appropriately spent. Each of the six centers disseminates curriculum products and information to the member states served by each center. The ECCMC serves the twelve states in USOE Regions III and V.

Each state in the USOE regions has a person designated as a state liaison representative (SLR) to the ECCMC. Ideally, the SLR should be a member of the RCU staff. If the state is organized to include curriculum as a part of the RCU, this will automatically occur. In Illinois, operation of the ECCMC is the second function of the Research and Development Section. The ECCMC project director is responsible to the section manager for administrative matters.

Staff and Role Function

The team approach is used in the management of program improvement efforts for each identified priority topic or area. A monitoring team is comprised of a contract administrator, a process specialist, and a resource specialist. The contract administrator has primary responsibility for a given priority area throughout the phases of research, development, testing, diffusion, and implementation. The benefits of having one person primarily responsible for a priority area throughout the one or more years of the program improvement activity are continuity of effort and efficiency in development and delivery.

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The process specialist and the resource specialist perform support and/or content expertise functions. The process specialist has expertise in a particular process or phase of the continuum; e.g., research, curriculum development, demonstration sites, or preservice education. As a priority area moves through the continuum, different process specialists could be used to provide the appropriate input during that particular phase. Each staff person is carefully chosen at the time of hire to insure that the section maintains a balanced staff of highly qualified personnel skilled in research, curriculum, and personnel development concepts and techniques.

The resource specialists are used intermittently throughout the continuum to provide input to the project regarding the subject matter or technical specialization under development. These persons come from other sections within DAVTE and serve as the content specialists for a given area. They are necessary for curriculum development activities and will play an ever increasing role in the program improvement function as P.L. 94-482 is fully implemented.

C. Research and Development Section/Priority Setting Procedures

P.L. 94-482 requires that all activities be based on sound priorities for program improvement. The law requires a state to conduct activities either through contracts managed by the RCU or internally by the RCU staff. For the past eight years, Illinois has conducted program improvement activities via a request for proposal/contract process that has been based on priorities generated from state and local data. In Illinois, a contract is defined as a two or more party agreement based on measurable outcomes that are product or service oriented. Objectives are stated in measurable terms, procedures are established against time for each objective, and every objective/procedure has evaluation criteria for the measurement of progress. The contract operates on the basis of direct cost reimbursement for products and/or services rendered.

The mandatory application of the federal procurement rules and regulations of the 1976 Amendments has added to the reporting and approval burden and has made it much more difficult for states to operate a contracting process. In fact, in several states the operational context of the federal rules and regulations has rendered the RCU almost helpless in terms of implementing the true intent of the legislation. In four states, the use of the word "contracts" means that paperwork has to go to the governor's office for sign off. Immediate removal of the requirement for states to adhere to the federal contract provisions would improve the state level program improvement function.

A priority is the combination of the magnitude of a defined need together with the plausibility and feasibility of meeting that need in full or in part with the knowledge, time, money, technology, and human resources available. The magnitude of a particular need is not necessarily based on the frequency that a particular need is voiced or on a "straw vote" of interested persons. Instead, a priority is based on an assessment of the severity of a particular need and on the degree and breadth of beneficial and desired impact possible on the lives of the clients of vocational education, primarily, and secondarily, on the needs of the economic community. The Illinois system of needs assessment is divided into two phases: data collection and priority determination.

Data Collection Phase

In the data collection phase, data is captured, compiled, and synthesized. First, data is obtained regarding human wants and needs in vocational education which might be addressed through program improvement activities.

Such data is captured through a variety of methods including the following:

1. Statewide Survey. During September and October of each year, a survey entitled Needs Assessment for Program Improvement and Personnel Development in Vocational Education (see appendix A, page 100) is distributed to various audiences throughout Illinois, including top level administrators, vocational directors, and classroom

teachers at the elementary, secondary, postsecondary, and university level; to key administrators and staff of business, industry, and labor organizations; and to personnel of private eduational management, research, and materials development firms. Appendix B on page 102 is a list of audiences and number of copies distributed.

2. Composite Three Phase Evaluation Report. Each year the Office of Vocational Research at the University of Illinois and the Program Approval and Evaluaton Section prepare a report which is a compilation of all of the evaluation reports generated during the year from the on-site evaluations of occupational programs. At least 20 percent of the local educational agencies in Illinois are evaluated each year. This Composite Evaluation Report for Occupational Education in the State of Illinois contains conclusions, recommendations, and suggested solutions for the improvement of vocational education in eight areas. These results are reviewed for data which may be addressed through program improvement activities.

3. Dissemination and priority input conferences are held to obtain verbal and written input. Other internal data sources, such as past research reports, are reviewed and state staff are queried for input.

4. Legislation. Recent federal and state legislation is reviewed annually to ascertain those areas that have direct implications for program improvement efforts.

5. Annual Evaluation Report of the Advisory Council on Adult, Vocational, and Technical Education. Data pertinent to program improvement needs are taken from this report and used in the priority development process.

6. Existing Activities. Program improvement efforts currently underway in the Research and Development Section are reviewed to determine which efforts should be continued and how they should be continued.

7. Miscellaneous. The entire professional staff of the Research and Development Section is constantly searching for topics and areas for program improvement activities. Many such needs are identified through informal contacts via telephone, correspondence, and discussions at meetings, conventions, and workshops.

This process is conducted in an informal manner and cannot be totally defended from a strict traditional research viewpoint. However, when the inappropriate responses are separated from sound data, certain trends and issues emerge which tend to represent the real research and developmental needs at the local level that can be addressed by a state agency. These trends and issues serve as the inital base for those program improvement priorites which ultimately emerge as the agency's annual request for proposals booklet. This type of priority determination process can be used as a base for activities to be contracted as well as for determining the type of research to be done internally by staff.

Beginning in FY 1980, this service will be conducted by the Office of Vocational Education Research (OVER) at the University of Illinois. OVER will provide the department with data from which it can make program improvement priority decisions. OVER will use most of the same data collection techniques previously described to arrive at its recommendations. OVER will continue to survey the field and state staff for input. It will continue to look at past research and other documents. Since OVER is already responsible for the preparation of the Composite Three Phase Evaluation Report, this data can be merged with other input to obtain balance between ideas that surface and ideas that represent conclusions drawn from the status of programs in local schools. OVER will convene at least two panels of national and state leaders in research and innovation for discussion of trends and issues. It will use forty key opinion leaders in Illinois as a part of the review and analysis process. The final step will be to review the priority ideas against existing national information retrieval systems, such as ERIC, to determine potential duplication and/or to provide a ready list of resources for parties interested in writing proposals related to the various issues. The priorities will ultimately emerge in the form of requests for proposals. The priorities could just as easily emerge as projects to be conducted by in-house staff if a state so desires.

Priority Determination Phase

The priority determination phase involves rendering the data base of information into a listing of possible program improvement activities for the coming fiscal year. This is done initially by the professional staff of the Research and Development Section, and is subsequently reviewed, critiqued, and revised by the following groups:

1. The entire professional staff of the Department of Adult, Vocational, and Technical Education.
2. The department's Administrative Council which is composed of the managers of each of the eight administrative sections.
3. The State Advisory Council on Adult, Vocational, and Technical Education.

4. The University Occupational Education Coordinators Council which is comprised of representatives of each of the eight public universities in Illinois which have training programs for vocational education personnel.

During November and December, Research and Development Section staff review the priorities initially identified and assess them against all resources available. Simultaneously, staff evaluate all ongoing projects to determine those worthy of continuation for a second, third, or fourth phase. Projects are evaluated by measuring progress against the stated goals and objectives contained in the funding agreement. Once the reviews have been completed, the list of ongoing and newly proposed activities is reviewed by all departmental staff.

In late December, the list is finalized and submitted to the assistant superintendent for Adult, Vocational, and Technical Education and the executive deputy superintendent. Once the activities are formally approved, they are then incorporated into the annual state plan for the following fiscal year. The Research Section staff then write requests for proposals (RFPs) for each newly identified activity. In early March, all RFPs are consolidated into a single bulletin which is mailed to over three thousand local agencies and individuals.

Proposal writers are given six to eight weeks to respond to RFPs. The proposal review process takes approximately two weeks. All new projects are usually selected and approved for funding by June. A more detailed description of the request for proposal process follows.

Request for Proposal (RFP) Process

Based on priorities for program improvement identified through the priority determination process, requests for proposals (RFPs) are developed to solicit competitive proposals from interested educational agencies. For continuation projects, proposals are requested from the existing contracted agency for continued funding. When existing contracted agencies have not performed to expectations, a new agency is identified through the RFP process. Personnel development activities specific to universities are identified through a one and five year plan process that will be described later.

Given the newly identified program improvement priorities, the following sequential steps are taken to develop each RFP:

1. The Research and Development Section manager assigns a contract administrator to each program improvement priority. Assignments are based on each administrator's expertise and interest and their relative work load. Resource specialists are requested from the appropriate section manager at this point.

2. Each contract administrator conducts a review of literature on each program improvement priority. This review of literature is done in cooperation with the East Central Curriculum Management Center (ECCMC), the Illinois Resources Dissemination Network (IRDN), and the ERIC Clearinghouse on Career and Vocational Education at the National Center for Research in Vocational Education. This national search includes: (a) a review of related research, (b) an identification of existing curricula materials, and (c) identification of existing developmental projects and activities related to the program improvement effort.

3. Each contract administrator prepares a short-range and long-range plan of objectives and actions for each priority program improvement effort. For an extensive program improvement effort, an RFP is issued for the development of the work plan for the entire activity. For example, to develop curriculum in an entire agricultural occupation cluster, a state would need to look at the total cluster, separate it into program areas, break program areas into courses, courses into tasks, etc. This overall planning should be done before major resources are invested.

4. Each contract administrator prepares a draft request for proposal for the first activity of the program improvement plan. A sample RFP is shown in appendix C, page 105.

5. The review of literature, short-and long-range plans, and drafted RFPs are reviewed by all section staff for content, articulation, coordination, and communication factors.

6. The literature review, program improvement plan, and refined RFPs are then reviewed, critiqued, and approved by the department administration.

7. All RFPs are compiled and mailed to all institutions, agencies, and individuals who might be interested in responding to one or more RFPs.

8. Two or more one-day RFP meetings are conducted in Illinois to further disseminate the RFP booklet and to answer questions regarding specific RFPs and the guidelines for preparing proposals. Notice of these meetings are included in the RFP booklet. Segments of the RFP book are included in appendix E, pages 115-123.

9. During the six week period provided for preparing proposals, all contract administrators are available to respond to questions and inquiries regarding specific RFPs and proposal preparation. The section staff assigned to write a specific RFP also arrange for competitive review of the proposals and monitor the project throughout the entire cycle.

Proposal Review Process

Every application received in response to a request for proposal is reviewed by a group of from six to ten reviewers. This group has the following composition:

1. At least two persons from within the State Board of Education (not Research and Development Section staff) who have expertise or interest in the subject matter addressed in the respective RFP.
2. At least four persons from outside the State Board of Education including: (a) practitioners such as teachers, counselors, administrators, teacher educators, or other RFP target audience representatives, and persons from the type of institution of the target audience; (b) persons from business, industry, and/or related state agencies that have an interest in the outcome of the proposed activity.

Persons selected as reviewers are paid for their services plus any expenses incurred for travel and lodging.

Upon receipt of the proposal, the support staff logs in each proposal and prepares a letter indicating receipt of the proposal. Proposals received after the deadline prescribed in the RFP are returned by mail to the proposer along with a letter indicating late receipt.

When all proposals have been received, a review packet is given to each reviewer at a three day session held for discussion and determination of funding recommendations. Each review packet contains the following:

1. A cover memo describing the packet
2. A copy of the RFP to which the proposals are addressed (see appendix C, page 105)

3. Suggestions on how to review proposals (see appendix F, page 125).
4. One copy of every proposal submitted to the respective RFP.
5. A proposal review form for each proposal (see appendix F, page 128).

When the review process is completed, the team recommendations are given to the appropriate contract administrator who compiles and analyzes the rankings. When review rankings indicate a clear first choice, the successful applicant is contacted for negotiations. When review rankings do not indicate a clear first choice, the contract administrator reviews the leading proposals and subsequently discusses recommended actions with the section manager. Other opinions may be sought before a final decision is made. In certain cases each applicant may be asked to respond to selected questions before a final decision is made. The developers of unsuccessful proposals are sent a letter indicating the disposition of their proposal. All but one copy of unsuccessful proposals are destroyed. The single copy along with the evaluation information is filed for possible future reference in case of inquiry. Unsuccessful proposals are returned to the proposing agency only upon request.

D. Evaluation, Impact, Dissemination, and Reporting Procedures

The Education Amendments of 1976 require that all contracts for vocational education program improvement activities contain an evaluation component which provides a means for assessment of project impact. This is applicable to all agreement, funded in support of applied research and curriulum development activities. This legislative mandate was implemented by paragraph 103.704 of the rules and regulations which states that:

> No contracts shall be made . . . [for research and/or exemplary program activities] . . . unless the applicant can demonstrate a reasonable probability that the contract will result in improved teaching techniques or curriculum materials that will be used in a substantial number of classrooms or other learning situations within five years after termination of such contracts.

This statement makes it absolutely essential that a dissemination/diffusion process be developed for each activity in the initial stages of the contractual activity. Major emphasis must be placed on early planning for dissemination if long-term efforts are to be documented related to the demonstration of concepts and programs, and the diffusion of materials, concepts, and programs. Emphasis must also be placed on a thorough plan of summative and formative evaluation that will provide adequate data for program validation as well as a process of obtaining impact indicators after the conclusion of an activity. A copy of the RFP guidelines for impact is included in appendix E, page 116. A sample form for determining intended impact is shown on page 121.

An indepth plan for dissemination/demonstration/diffusion is required as a major element of each contract proposal. The Research and Development Section formally evaluates each contract annually to insure that each project is progressing as proposed. A special contract based on a three phase approach for evaluation is initiated to fulfill this requirement. The Research and Development Section has directed its resources and staff to a total program of dissemination and diffusion. In addition to state board departments and personnel, the section, as a minimum, provides copies of all reports/products to the following:

- NIE dissemination
- ERIC
- ECCMC for distribution to NCMC network
- State and territory RCUs
- University Occupational Education Coordinators Council
- Vocational education regional directors
- Educational service region superintendents
- All local agencies as appropriate--elementary, secondary, postsecondary, university

The RFP guidelines for dissemination and diffusion can be reviewed in appendix E, page 122. A planning matrix is shown in appendix E, page 123.

Every State Board of Education funding agreement for a program improvement activity must include a section describing the implementation of a realistic evaluation technique. This technique must be one that provides an immediate evaluation of the project and also contains the information needed for the Research and Development Section to conduct impact assessments during or at the completion of the five-year time frame. This section is accountable even though a project may be over at the end of the formal contract period.

There is no specific design for evaluation that would be appropriate to all funding agreements. However, there are some general features that should be required of all projects. The design should be determined by the funded agency in concert with the contract administrator. The general features that should be required and provided for are as follows:

1. Evaluation of goals should be clearly stated and receptive to input from all sources.
2. Evaluation should help improve the program. It should contain information pertaining to weaknesses as well as strengths and provide constructive comments.
3. Evaluation procedures should address all contract objectives, both individually and in respect to all other objectives.
4. Evaluation design should contain a system for recording all data collected.
5. Evaluation design should provide an effective system for obtaining feedback information.

It is imperative that the name, address, and position of each person participating in the funding agreement be furnished as an integral part of the evaluation. This list will assist the Research and Development Section to complete the necessary follow-up activities in compliance with the five-year utilization requirements.

Every funding agreement for a program improvement activity describes (1) the present state of the art (where we are), (2) the desired goals (where we want to be), (3) implementation procedures (how to get there), and (4) evaluation procedures (how do we know when we have arrived). Evaluation is implicit in each of these phases and must be explicit in the specific section of each funding agreement. It is a postiive action which should be considered a learning experience for everyone involved while providing the funding agency with insight into future needs. The RFP guidelines for the evaluation elements of proposals are shown in appendix E, page 116.

Data Collection Policies and Procedures

To achieve the objectives stated within a funding agreement, certain data may need to be obtained from various sources, either public and/or private, in Illinois or the nation.

The State Board of Education systematically collects a considerable amount of data from public elementary and secondary schools in Illinois. Similarly, other state agencies collect pertinent information. If certain data are deemed necessary, it is the responsiblility of the project staff to determine if all or part of the data has already been captured and is available from one or more existing sources. If the data are not available, the project staff may proceed upon approval of the Research and Development Section to obtain such data as outlined in the approved funding agreement.

All data collection forms, correspondence, and reporting should be done in the name of the funded agency. Reference may be made within such documentation as to the cooperation with the state agency.

For example, "The (funded agency) in cooperation with the State Board of Education/Department of Adult, Vocational, and Technical Education/Research and Development Section is conducting a study to determine if students are learning as a result of X. We ask your voluntary cooperation in supplying us with certain data or information which will aid us in fulfilling the stated objectives of the study."

Institutions or individuals who cooperate by supplying requested data or information should receive feedback from the funded agency regarding the findings or utilization of such data. All data collection activities should have prior approval by the State Board of Education to avoid duplication of effort.

Auditing and Record Keeping

Every funding agreement between the State Board of Education and a funded agency is subject to a budgetary audit by the board and/or the federal government.

An audit consists primarily of a verification that expenses were made as budgeted. The auditor compares the approved budget and claims for reimbursement with the funded agency's documentation of all expenses and receipts. The auditor is concerned only with fiscal matters; the project's programmatic aspects are not examined during the audit.

It is the responsiblilty of the funded agency to compile and maintain all records and documentation. In general, the funded agency should document and retain everything related to project activities. Documentation includes invoices, checks, purchase and rental agreements, and payroll records. All records and documentation should be maintained for a minimum of five years or until a federal audit has been completed.

A sample of a project budget can be viewed in appendix D, page 109. An explanation of what is expected in budgets is also shown in appendix D.

Deliverables

The Education Amendments of 1976 (P.L. 94-482) mandates that the research coordinating unit (State Board of Education/ Department of Adult, Vocational, and Technical Education/Research and Development Section) show explicitly how funds available under this Act were used during the fiscal year. To assist Research and Development Section staff in measuring impact and accountability, it is necessary that reports and/or products be developed for each funding agreement.

The development of all project reports and products is the responsibility of the project director. The funded agency is responsible for the delivery of these materials to the Research and Development Section. Before official project reports are submitted to the section, they should be processed for review through the authorized funded agency official(s). All project materials intended to be reproduced for mass dissemination are submitted to the contract administrator for review according to the State Board of Education standards prior to reproduction. The funded agency is required to comply with all publications and design standards established by the board in the development of all final reports and products.

Products vary among projects, but typically a product is a tangible result or outcome of the project and often, more than one product is developed throughout the course of the project. Some examples of products include research reports, evaluation studies, curriculum materials, brochures, workshops, slide/tape presentations, filmstrip presentations, films, and newsletters. It should be noted that the final product is the major result or outcome of the project, and in some projects, the final product may be the final report. The number of copies to be delivered for each product is determined between the contract administrator and the project director during the negotiation of the funding agreement. (The master dissemination list used in Illinois is shown in appendix H, page 140.)

Dissemination of Reports and Materials

Under P.L. 94-482, the research coordinating unit, i.e., the Research and Development Section, is responsible for the dissemination and distribution of its reports and products. The section has the explicit responsibility for submitting abstracts, final reports, and products to the U.S. Office of Education and the National Center for Research in Vocational Education. The type of dissemination activity is determined by the section and may include such activities as workshops and mailings.

The section submits to the National Center for Research in Vocational Education the following:

1. Two copies of an abstract of each approved project for program improvement, within 30 days after approval of the project, containing the source and amount of funds obligated for the project.

2. Two copies of the final report resulting from the state project, within three months after the ending date of the project.

   (This reporting process is designed in such a way that materials submitted are automatically evaluated and processed into the ERIC system and Resources in Vocational Education (RIVE) operated by the National Center for Research in Vocational Education located at The Ohio State University.)

Depending on the scope of the project, as many as four different types of abstracts may be developed for each funding agreement. The four types are:

1. Proposal abstract. For funding consideration, all proposals must contain a proposal abstract as delineated in the request for proposal (RFP) guidelines.

2. Project abstract. The project abstract is developed at the time of negotiation or immediately thereafter, and reflects any changes negotiated in the project. If no changes are negotiated, the proposal abstract becomes the project abstract.

3. Final report abstract. All final reports include an abstract which summarizes the major components of the project as they were actually accomplished. If a final product is developed through the funding agreement, an abstract for each final product is included in the project's final report.

4. Final product abstract. All final products developed through a funding agreement contain a final product abstract within the contents of the actual product.

Reports. For every funding agreement, two types of reports--progress reports and final reports--are submitted to the contract administrator. The following is a description of these reports.

1. Progress report. Two copies of the progress report are filed with the contract administrator on the basis negotiated and specified in the funding agreement. The format below is used in the development of progress reports:

    a. State Board of Education funding agreement number

    b. Official project title

    c. Project director

    d. Funded agency

    e. Time period covered

    f. A list and brief description of all activities completed to date according to the timeline outlined in the funding agreement

    g. A brief explanation of the reasons why any activity was not initiated or completed to date according to the timeline outlined in the funding agreement

    h. A list of all meetings relative to the project attended by project staff during the progress reporting period

    i. A brief description of any meetings, conferences, and/or workshops relative to the project held during the progress reporting period

    j. A list of major activities planned during the next progress reporting period

    k. Copies of questionnaires, newsletters, brochures, news articles, journal articles, scripts, etc. which may have been developed during the progress reporting period.

2. Final Report. Unless otherwise negotiated, a minimum of twelve copies of the final report is filed with the contract administrator thirty days upon completion or termination of the funding agreement.

   The final report describes in detail all project activities conducted throughout the duration of the funding period; in short, the who, what, where, and when of the project.

Final claims for reimbursement are not processed until the final product(s) has been received and accepted by the contract administrator.

Curriculum Publications Clearinghouse

The Curriculum Publications Clearinghouse located at Western Illinois University at Macomb, Illinois operates under contract with the State Board of Education, and is responsible to the Research and Development Section with advisement from the administrative council. The clearinghouse provides curricular and other materials on a cost recovery basis and serves as a dissemination vehicle for program improvement output.

Copyright Policies

Due to the nature of certain projects, it is in the best interest of the State Board of Education and the funded agency to provide the protection of a copyright for select materials developed through a funding agreement. Copyright protection is most suitable for curriculum or instructional materials that have a strong potential for mass market dissemination by a commercial firm.

Any material deemed appropriate is copyrighted under the Illinois State Board of Education rather than in the name of the funded agency or the project director. This stipulation is made because of the broader authority for reproduction permitted to a governmental agency, as opposed to other types of agencies or individuals. A decision to copyright is a joint decision between the Illinois State Board of Education and the funded agency.

The board's interest in copyright is one of protection. Methods for providing author credit and royalties are a part of the board's procedures. It is the legal position of the State Board of Education that materials produced through a funding agreement belong, in part or in total, to the State Board of Education. The board has a legal base to jointly control copyright, dissemination, and distribution of materials that have the board's name affixed.

In the event a product is copyrighted, the State Board of Education may release the right for commercial publication, provided certain agency requirements are met which guarantee selection of a publisher through a competitive process. The final decision for the selection of a publisher is made jointly by board staff and the funded agency. A release is final only with the express, written permission of the state superintendent.

E. University Personnel Development Liaison Linkage Activities

University Occupational Education Coordinators Council

The University Occupational Education Coordinators Council (hereafter referred to as the liaison council) is comprised of representatives from the Department of Adult, Vocational, and Technical Education and a representative from each of the eight public universities in Illinois which have preservice and inservice programs for preparing vocational education personnel. These universities include the following:

Southern Illinois University - Carbondale
Southern Illinois University - Edwardsville
Illinois State University - Normal
Northern Illinois University - DeKalb
Western Illinois University - Macomb
Eastern Illinois University - Charleston
University of Illinois - Urbana
Chicago State University - Chicago

In addition to the above members, the liaison council also includes several ex-officio members representing the Illinois Board of Higher Education, Illinois Community College Board, State Advisory Council for Vocational Education, and representatives from other interested universities.

The liaison council, which has been in continuous operation since 1969, meets twelve times annually for the purposes of:

1. Coordinating preservice programs for personnel development.
2. Interfacing state office level and university level needs and resources for program improvement.

3. Serving in an advisory capacity to the Department of Adult, Vocational, and Technical Education regarding program support and improvement priorities, activities and procedures, and agency policies and procedures.

4. Serving as a state office representative on each university campus to coordinate and facilitate any mutual state office-university efforts such as funding, consulting activities, sharing of materials, and course work arrangements.

A portion of each university representative's salary and other miscellaneous expenses are underwritten by the State Board of Education through individual funding agreements.

University One and Five Year Plan Process for Personnel Development

In FY 1978, the Department of Adult, Vocational, and Technical Education initiated a new concept for the funding of personnel development activities with the eight university members of the liaison council. Known as the University One and Five Year Plan, it is patterned after the concept of the local agency one and five year plan used for funding programs in Illinois.

The plan is comprehensive. It addresses all aspects of preservice and inservice education at the university level. Once the department has made a preliminary determination concerning the activities it would like to fund, proposals are submitted using the guidelines contained in the RFP book.

Universities are encouraged to make their plan comprehensive to all aspects of adult, vocational, and technical education. They are told that the plan is a vehicle for program improvement at the university level, not just a vehicle for funding.

IV. A FRAMEWORK FOR COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT

The key elements needed for the management of a comprehensive program improvement function in vocational education include planning, coordinating, directing, and disseminating all activities in research, exemplary and innovative programs, curriculum development, and personnel development through a single vehicle called the Comprehensive Plan for Program Improvement administered by the RCU. The Education Amendments of 1976 provide a logic base for operating in a continuum type mode by emphasizing coordination among the various sections of the Act. To accomplish this, a high degree of cooperation and direct involvement from everyone associated with the function is absolutely necessary. The key to success can be reduced to a simple situation in which everyone is knowledgeable of and involved in the program to the highest degree possible. Knowledge and involvement reduce suspicion and fear. Involvement brings ownership which can lead to advocacy.

The two ingredients for success--internal agency articulation and coordination--can be reduced to one element: communication. The lack of communication is the single most common factor leading to failure in any structure or system.

In operating a comprehensive system for program improvement in Illinois, the Research and Development Section uses a team approach in the management of activities. The team members include a contract administrator, process specialist, and a resource person. Since the contract administrator and the process specialist almost always come from the Research and Development Section staff, articulation and coordination are not major problems. Major problems tend to occur when members of other sections are assigned as resource specialists to work with a specific project or group of activities. This does not mean that a negative relationship exists among the other sections but suggests that communication problems increase in proportion to the complexity of the activity and the number of persons involved. The further the activity is removed from a one-person or a one-section situation, the greater the probability that problems will occur; consequently, the greater the need for a formalized process of communication.

The element of communication is so critical in the continuum model that Illinois has developed a framework for establishing staff relationships between the Research and Development Section and other sections and/or persons involved in program improvement. The framework is based on several assumptions which are essential for a complete understanding. It is also set against the normal daily process of doing business. This framework also serves as a summary of the key points made in this paper.

A. Framework for Establishing Working Relationships Between the RCU and Other Agency Personnel

At first glance it would appear that the establishment of a viable working relationship between RCU personnel and resource personnel from other sections should be a simple, straightforward process based on informal linkages and good personnel relationships among professionals. However, an informal arrangement is not feasible because of increased work loads and demands constantly being placed on all staff from every direction. In order to prepare adequate guidelines, the following assumptions and parameters have been established:

1. The rules and regulations for implementation of Subpart 3, Title II Vocational Education Public Law 94-482 Education Amendments of 1976 indicate that if a state chooses to conduct program improvement activities which include Section 131 (Research), Section 132 (Exemplary and Innovative Programs), and Section 133 (Curriculum Development) activities, they must be coordinated through the research coordinating unit (RCU) and the activities must be done internally or funded externally through a contractual agreement. The rules and regulations further provide that the RCU will prepare a comprehensive plan for program improvement to be included as an integral part of the state's one and five year plan. This plan is to delineate the state's priorities for program improvement, describe the methods to be used for addressing these priorities, show the allocation of resources for each priority, and outline the dissemination procedures to be used for insuring that the products developed will have a significant impact in a substantial number of classrooms or learning situations within five years of the termination of the contract. Since the Research and Development Section has been designated as the Illinois RCU in the state plan, this mandate becomes that section's responsibility.

2. The Education Amendments of 1976 group Section 134 (Vocational Guidance and Counseling), Section 135 (Vocational Education Personnel Training), and Section 136 (Grants to Assist in Overcoming Sex Bias) under the umbrella of supportive services. This allows the state to operate on a grant or contract basis which provides for greater flexibility in terms of management. Legislatively there are no official ties between these funds and the state RCU function. Philosophically, there are ties that can be established and these activities, as well as other activities, can be managed by the RCU if a state so chooses.

3. Illinois, by virtue of its most recent organization structure and by designation in the annual state plan has assigned administrative management responsibility for research, exemplary and innovative programs, curriculum development, personnel development, and grants related to sex equity to the Research and Development Section. This assignment stems from the legislation as well as the logic of linking certain aspects of personnel development to the research and development process as a diffusion element in the total program improvement continuum. The rules and regulations implementing P.L. 94-482 provide that sex equity grants be research, exemplary and innovative, curriculum development, and/or personnel development by purpose. Placing the funding responsibility with the Research and Development Section provides for the utilization of an already existing process for handling grants or contractual funding agreements.

4. P.L. 94-482 gives a state the option of using a grant and/or contract for other types of activities from other sources of funds such as Displaced Homemakers and Work Experience Career Exploration Programs. The Law does not make many direct ties between these funds, the RCU, or the concept of program improvement as defined by that Law but there is no reason why they cannot be compatible.

5. The Illinois Department of Adult, Vocational, and Technical Education has identified priorities and supported several different types of activities through funding agreements since FY 1972. The funding agreement has taken the form of a contract by which the board has promoted the idea of: (a) requiring objectives to be stated in in measurable terms; (b) relating procedures to each objective with the stipulation that the procedures be time

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specific and outcome oriented; (c) asking that the applicant define a formative and summative evaluation process that is tied to each objective and/or procedure that places major emphasis on impact; (d) insisting on a dissemination plan; (e) asking for job descriptions and the names and qualifications of personnel filling the positions; (f) insisting on the designation of deliverables; and (g) operating on the cost reimbursement principle of funds receivable upon delivery of product and/or service.

The process for developing contracts is based on the concepts of preestablished priorities, the issuance of requests for proposals or a request for applications, the competitive review, and the award of a funding agreement with predetermined and prespecified outcomes. The critical point of any contract based on an RFP, which in turn is based on a priority, is the contracting with an external agency to perform a service or develop a product. This assumes that most of the tasks and the methods used for addressing the task are a part of the funding agreement between the State Board of Education and the contracted agency. This means that any major changes of substance made while the contract is in force should be accomplished by negotiations. All State Board personnel involved in the process are advisors rather than regulators. If a contracted agency does not fulfill its function or perform the service desired, the contract can be terminated as specified by procedures in the RFP book.

6. The assistant superintendent has assigned the Research and Development Section the overall responsibility for all contracting and the establishment of rules and regulations for same. The assistant superintendent has directed that the contract administrator is the person who will be held responsible for the outcome of a given activity. This administrator is responsible to the section manager who is in turn responsible to the assistant superintendent for the assigned activity. The Research and Development contract administrator is responsible for coordinating the contracting process and for seeing that all management and monitoring functions are fulfilled.

Project Categories

It is critical to the concept of program improvement that selected projects have the involvement of resource persons in a given subject matter or concept area. The need for a resource expert is dictated by the nature of a given activity. Projects related to the development or improvement of an operational program in a local school need greater subject matter content involvement than those projects limited to research conducted in a university setting.

To carry this point further, the different types of contractual/grant activities presently being handled by the board will be examined, specifically the type of project, operational context of project, source of funds, and section assigned. The various types of activities are as follows:

1. The Research and Development Section funds a number of projects each year from Section 130 that do not require a content expert. Except for occasional requests for such things as names of schools or individual persons, the nature of the project is such that no one other than the assigned contract administrator is needed. In these cases, the contract administrator does everything necessary to fulfill the requirements for management and monitoring.

2. In increasing numbers, the Research and Development Section is funding projects that fall under the broad umbrella of program improvement which deal specifically with the development of curriculum and/or instructional materials that have direct applicability to reimbursable programs operated on a daily basis in local schools. These projects are usually followed by inservice workshops and/or projects designed to disseminate, demonstrate, and/or diffuse the materials into a large number of local schools; and/or preservice programs that incorporate the concepts into teacher education programs.

This category of projects places the highest demand for subject matter expertise from other sections or from outside the board. The need for involvement is based on such considerations as the type of project under consideration, the stage of development, and the subject matter involved. The nature of each project dictates the terms of involvement; therefore, the terms of involvement must be negotiated in advance for each activity. A key point to remember is that in a contractual mode a resource person is advisory and the terms of the contract dictate the receipt and treatment of input. A major problem occurs when anyone who has access to a project can effect a change at any point in the process with out checking with anyone.

3. The third category of projects is funded from other than Section 130 funds. These funds are used to support and operate programs with students at the local level. The Research and Development Section is responsible for fiscal management while program management stays with the originating section which is responsible for management of that source of funds. This category includes the bilingual projects. To a lesser degree the Research and Development Section is involved with the energy program through the use of the RFP booklet for announcement of the annual awards. Coordination also occurs for evaluation of the proposals.

4. The fourth category includes activities such as the career guidance centers (funded from Section 130) for which the management (except for overall budget preparation for program improvement and supportive services legislative allocations) lies with the Special Program Section. Certain activities that are supportive of guidance and counseling, such as inservice and evaluation functions, fall in category 2 and are treated in that context.

Finally, one other set of parameters should be examined. This set addresses the need for involvement in the total management process. From the Research and Development Section perspective there are four major points in this process that need the involvement of more than one section. These points include:

(1) priority input and development, (2) RFP development, (3) proposal review, and (4) project monitoring which includes the dissemination and diffusion process. Specific procedures for interface have been determined for each of these stages.

Framework

1. Priority Input and Development Stage

   a. In August, the Research and Development Section initiates the priority determination process by conducting surveys and information analysis.

   b. By October 30, all sections are asked to complete priority forms, to prioritize their needs, and to submit them to the Research and Development Section. Data is also received from such sources as the State Advisory Council, the Annual Composite Evaluation Review, and a review of the current and past research and development activities.

   c. By November 15, the section staff analyzes and summarizes all data and returns a composite to all other section managers for review and comment.

   d. By December 1, all input is returned to the section for analysis and consolidation.

   e. By the second Monday in December, the section staff prepares a list of priorities with documentation and presents the list at a formal meeting of the administrative council for approval.

   f. The Research and Development staff translates the priorities into activity statements for inclusion in the annual plan by the deadline determined by the Planning and Reports Section manager.

2. Request for Proposal (RFP) Development Stage

   a. By January 15, the Research and Development Section manager meets with other section managers to determine the assignments for writing requests for proposals (RFPs). These assignments are generated from topics on the approved priority list.

   b. By January 30, a contract administrator and a resource person are assigned to each activity with the exception of open catgory activities, due to the nonspecific nature of the open category.

c. The section makes all final arrangements for preparation and issuance of the RFP booklets by March 15. All RFPs supplied by other sections are forwarded to the Research and Development Section by February 15 of each year.

3. Proposal Review Stage

a. By February 15, the Research and Development Section manager meets with the managers of other sections to discuss the need for personnel to review proposals.

b. By March 1, the managers assign reviewers from within their section in accordance with the categorical need agreed upon by all managers involved. Section managers are asked to nominate people from the field for proposal reviewers.

c. The process is expedited if the person originally designated as a writing resource person for a task-specific RFP is assigned to review the proposal and later monitor the project in question. This assignment philosophy is consistent with the Research and Development Section practice of a contract administrator following a project from inception to completion. For open category activities, it is suggested that a representative from one of the following areas be designated as a reviewer and assume content responsibilities:

- Agricultural Occupations
- Home Economics Occupations
- Business, Marketing, and Management Occupations
- Industrial Oriented Occupations
- Health Occupations
- Disadvantaged and Handicapped
- Guidance and Counseling
- Co-op Programs
- Planning and Reports Section
- Program Approval and Evaluation Section

4. Project Monitoring Stage

a. Once a contract administrator and a content specialist have been named, these individuals meet to plot the course of a given activity. Plotting the course is based on the RFP and the intent of the activity. The role and function of each person is reduced to writing.

b. Once a proposal has been selected for funding, the contract administrator and the resource person meet to agree on points to be negotiated. Once these are agreed upon, the contract administrator is responsible for the negotiations. Disputes are resolved via the chain of command prior to entering final negotia- This process eliminates disputes between external personnel during a negotiation session.

c. Within thirty days after a contract has been approved, the contract administrator and the resource person meet with the contracted agency and lay out a plan of action.

d. Periodically throughout the contract, meetings are held in accordance with the funding agreement and action plan. In every case, the contract administrator coordinates with other staff concerning the agenda for these meetings.

e. Project personnel are advised of the relationship between internal personnel and their role in the activity. In all cases, unless otherwise agreed upon, the project directors and staff are advised that the contract administrator is their official contact.

f. Initial internal communications are established through the managerial level with copies of all written correspondence going to the assistant superintendent.

The above plan simply formalizes what should occur normally. No one set of rules can be established that covers every situation because of the variety of activities and the number of people involved. The key is communication throughout the entire process. (Figure 5 is a summary of the program improvement process.)

B. Key Elements for Operation of a Comprehensive Program Improvement System Through a Research Coordinating Unit

There are several elements essential to the effective development and operation of a comprehensive program improvement

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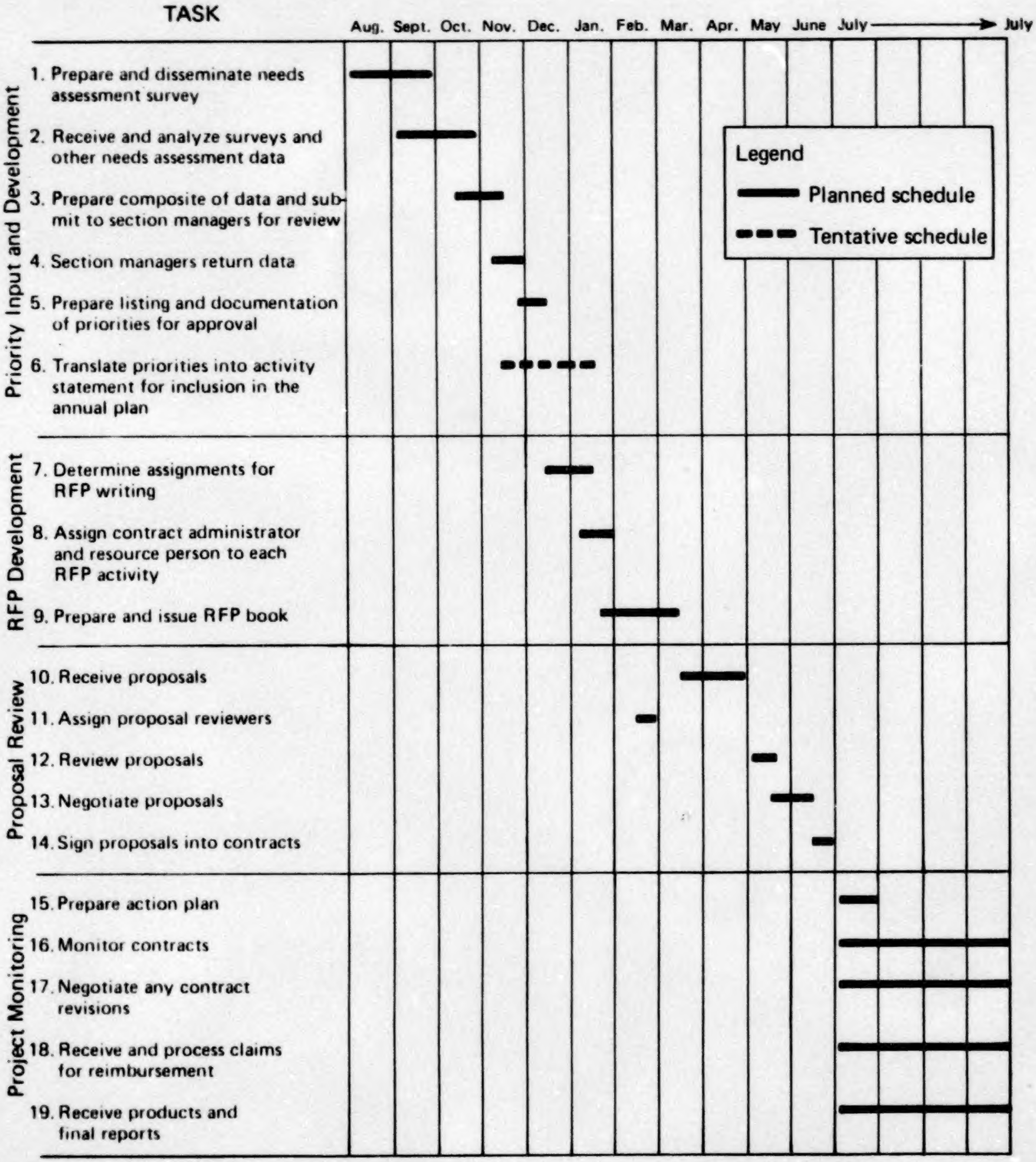
FIGURE 5
Task/Time Framework for State Program Improvement Activities



system for vocational education through a research coordinating unit. The guidelines contained on the following pages are presented to states interested in developing and/or upgrading the program improvement function. The guidelines are presented in a brief form so that they can be used as a checklist for review of an existing function or as a guide for the development of a new function. There are some key assumptions necessary to an understanding of these guidelines. It is assumed that the reader does have or will gain:

1. A thorough knowledge of all current legislation and rules and regulations that are applicable to the program improvement/research coordinating unit function in vocational education.
2. A knowledge of existing literature that is relevant to the management and operation of a research coordinating unit. The RCU should be an integral part of the state vocational education structure.
3. A philosophical or conceptual understanding of the program improvement function within a vocational education framework.
4. A conceptual understanding of the purpose of a research coordinating unit.

Given these assumptions, the following guidelines are essential to the development and operation of a comprehensive system of program improvement in vocational education:

1. Gain or have the administrative support of the state director of vocational education for the concept of program improvement. Without administrative support and involvement of key staff, the concept will fail.
2. A single unit should be responsible for coordinating all elements of the program improvement system. The current legislation calls this a research coordinating unit but this term may be outdated.

3. Have a conceptual base or operational model such as research and assessment, product/service development and testing, or diffusion and personnel development, with assessment and evaluation mechanisms built into the operational model. This model provides for the articulation and coordination in and among the elements.

4. Define program improvement as a comprehensive research, development, and diffusion process that is driven by a priority or state/local needs base as opposed to a collection of categorical programs such as research, curriculum, etc.

5. Develop a comprehensive plan for program improvement which includes the administrative structure of the RCU, the annual priorities for program improvement activities, a description of the method for addressing these priorities, the allocation of resources by priority or need, the various techniques to be used for dissemination and diffusion of the products, and the methods to be used for accountability and input. Have a plan! Use the plan!

6. Develop a needs assessment process that produces sound data for identification of priorities for program improvement activities. The process should examine all aspects of vocational education and should place a high level of emphasis on input from the practitioner at the local level as well as traditional information sources such as reports, advisory groups, and state staff.

7. Given a legislative directive for doing work internally or contracting externally, develop an equitable and fair process for soliciting and identifying those agencies that will address the state's priorities. Probably the most common competitive process is the request for proposal process. Regardless of the process, insure that everyone involved knows the rules and that the system is operated according to the rules. An aboveboard, honestly operated system will generally be accepted and supported by the field.

8. Develop a method for evaluating activities while they are in progress and upon completion. This needs to be highly formalized so that the research coordinating unit is provided with accountability data for long-range impact purposes. Field testing and validation techniques should be an integral part of each activity. This evaluation and impact system should be integrated into every activity on an ongoing basis.

9. Dissemination and diffusion activities should be planned into every activity from the beginning of the activity. Without a good diffusion and dissemination process, one cannot expect to document significant impact referenced in the legislation. Maximum use should be made of the developers in the diffusion process. They know their product best.

10. Personnel development activities, both preservice and inservice, should be considered integral to a total program improvement concept. Not all personnel development activities can be defined as diffusion techniques, but preservice and inservice techniques can certainly be used effectively as diffusion devices.

11. Develop an effective activity/project monitoring system that maximizes available staff and resources. Be sure the system is accountable within itself. Be sure contractual documents are outcome-based and budgeted in such a way that financial accountability can be established through auditing.

12. Develop a system for the integration of other agency staff into the program improvement process. Maximize the use of resource people in their area of expertise using RCU staff as facilitators of the process.

13. Use local people to the greatest extent possible. They are where the action is. They are on the cutting edge and know the problems first. They are also the best barometers of whether something will work or not.

14. Have a well-balanced staff in terms of expertise, equity, etc. Assign responsibilities to staff and let them operate the system.

15. Be a risk taker. Nothing innovative will ever occur unless you are willing to stick your neck out.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Department of Adult, Vocational and Technical Education
100 North First Street
Springfield, Illinois 62777

NEEDS ASSESSMENT FOR PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT AND PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

INSTRUCTIONS: *Each year, the Research and Development Section of the Department of Adult, Vocational and Technical Education invites information and opinions as to the areas of need and specific topics for contracted activities. These include research, curriculum, pre service, inservice, exemplary, demonstration, and/or other development-type activities.* ***We are looking for innovative ideas and concepts which would lend to program improvement of vocational education in Illinois.*** *On this form, please outline what you consider to be a need which could be fulfilled with such a contracted activity during the next fiscal year. Return no later than November 1, to the above address. Questions may be addressed to the Department of Adult, Vocational and Technical Education at (217) 782-4620.*

PLEASE NOTE: This is not a proposal. You will not receive direct feedback on the information you include here. Competitive proposals on priority topics will be requested through Requests for Proposals (RFPs) which will be disseminated later in this fiscal year. Use a separate form for each need or topic.

NAME	**YOUR EMPLOYMENT TITLE**
ADDRESS	**CITY AND STATE (Zip Code)**

INSTITUTION YOU REPRESENT

DESCRIPTIVE TITLE FOR POSSIBLE ACTIVITY

Describe the need or area of concern. Give rationale and cite any pertinent data which supports your concern.

Outline a possible activity to fulfill the need or area of concern.

IOE 15-20 (9/77)

(USE REVERSE SIDE OR ADD ADDITIONAL PAGES AS NECESSARY)

APPENDIX B

Typical Distribution Listing for NEEDS ASSESSMENT Survey Form

	Target Group	n	Forms to Each	Total Forms
1.	Superintendents of Educational Service Regions	79	2	158
2.	Elementary District Superintendents	458	1	458
3.	Secondary District Superintendents	130	2	260
4.	Unit District Superintendents	447	2	894
5.	High School Occupational Education Departments	739	3	2217
6.	Area Vocational Center Directors	28	3	84
7.	Vocational Deans in Community Colleges	51	5	255
8.	Public Junior Colleges	51	2	102
9.	Deans of Colleges of Education	61	3	183
10.	University Occupational Education Coordinators	8	20	160
11.	State Advisory Council for Vocational Education	1	10	10
12.	Illinois Community College Board	1	3	3
13.	Board of Higher Education	1	2	2
14.	Department of Adult, Vocational, and Technical Education Managers	6	10	60
15.	Program Service Team Members	73	1	73
16.	Other State Board Managers	20	3	60
17.	Special State Agencies	61	2	122
18.	Current Project Directors	80	2	160
19.	Illinois Federation of Teachers	1	2	2
20.	Illinois Education Association	1	2	2
21.	Illinois Principals Association	1	2	2
22.	Illinois Association of School Administrators	1	2	2

	Target Group	n	Forms to Each	Total Forms
23.	Illinois Association of School Boards	1	2	2
24.	Illinois Vocational Association (6 affiliates)	1	18	18
25.	Illinois Cooperative Vocational Education Coordinators Association	1	2	2
26.	Illinois Coordinating Council for Occupational Youth Organization	1	5	5
27.	Miscellaneous	15	1	15
	TOTAL	2318		5311

APPENDIX C

SAMPLE
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

ISSUED TO:	Educational agencies, public and private, and other parties or organizations interested in developing proposals.
RFP CODE:	80-133-4.4.2-A (This code must appear on the Funding Agreement Form in the upper right-hand corner.)
ACTIVITY GOAL:	To develop competency-based curriculum guides in vocational education. This activity is open for local input.
RATIONALE FOR ACTIVITY:	Vocational teachers in local educational agencies are constantly aware of the need for new or updated curricular materials which will provide youth and adults with job entry and job advancement skills in existing or emerging occupational fields. A need exists to develop and implement competency-based curriculum guides. The Research and Development Section of the Division of Adult, Vocational, and Technical Education (DAVTE) is interested in developing, at the local level, those programs or concepts identified as areas that are worthy of support and that have the capability of being transported to other sites on a statewide basis.
SUGGESTIONS AND MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR ACCOMPLISHING THIS ACTIVITY:	This request is an open category for proposals to be initiated at the local level. The intent is for each proposer to identify programs or processes in vocational education that should be developed and ultimately disseminated to vocational educators in the state. The applicant should outline procedures for accomplishing the following: 1. Determining job competencies for the particular occupational field including minimum job entry competencies. 2. Determining career ladders and criteria for promotion.

3. Formulating measurable objectives or goals.

4. Determining teaching and evaluation strategies for each goal.

5. Identifying teaching resources.

6. Field testing materials developed.

SPECIAL NOTE: It may be necessary for developmental activities of this nature to extend beyond one contracting period. As such, the proposal must provide a general project design for the entire period with detailed activities to be completed during FY 1980. Upon successful completion of this funding agreement, the funded agency may request, on a sole source basis, a funding agreement to continue project activities.

Competency-based curriculum development projects should follow a systematic process for developing products. Each curriculum product must follow the format contained in the Illinois State Board of Education publication entitled SPECIFICATIONS AND MODEL FORMAT FOR CURRICULUM PRODUCTS which is available from DAVTE.

The proposal must state the rationale, i.e., research base, upon which the need for development is based, as well as procedures for developing the material.

Proposals must be prepared in accord with the GUIDELINES AND SPECIFICATIONS FOR PREPARING PROPOSALS.

RFP ASSURANCE: In the development of a proposal for this RFP, the applicant must address: (1) the following requirement which is mandated for the use of curriculum funds under P.L. 94-482 and (2) the common assurances required by the Illinois State Board of Education for funding agreements. If the applicant fails to respond adequately to these RFP provisions, the proposal will not be considered in the review and recommendation process for funding.

Pursuant to P.L. 94-482, the applicant must:

	Demonstrate (in the proposal contents) a reasonable probability that the program, project, or activity will result in improved teaching techniques/curriculum materials that will be used in a substantial number of classrooms or other learning situations within five years after the termination of the funding agreement.
DELIVERABLES:	Seven hundred and fifty (750) copies of the final product and twenty (20) copies of a final report must be delivered to the Research and Development Section upon completion of the program, project, or activity. A copy of the final product and report must be submitted to DAVTE for review and approval before being reproduced.
TIME FRAME:	The proposed contract period for this activity is eleven months with an ending date of June 30, 1980.
FUNDS AVAILABLE:	Depends on the nature and scope of each application received.
SUBMIT PROPOSAL TO:	Research and Development Section, E-426 Department of Adult, Vocational, and Technical Education 100 North First Street Springfield, Illinois 62777 Telephone: (217) 782-4620
	Any questions pertaining to this RFP should be addressed to Peggy Pool at the above address and telephone number.

APPENDIX D

BUDGET PROVISIONS

All budgets must be itemized under five categories. Authorized categories are: (1) salaries, (2) contractual services, (3) materials and supplies, (4) travel, and (5) other related expenses. As a minimum, every budget must utilize the following three columns:

1. Budget request from State Board of Education (SBE)
2. Local contribution
3. Total budget

Local contribution includes all actual project expenditures incurred by an agency that are auditable. At the discretion of the applicant, nonauditable in-kind contributions may be listed on a separate sheet attached to the budget. Local contributions are not required and where none are provided a zero(-0-) must be entered in the budget line. All budget amounts should be rounded up to the nearest whole dollar.

An explanation for each of the five budget categories follows:

1. Salaries. Projected expenditures for salaries, including anticipated annual increases, of personnel performing direct project services. Indicate job title, percentage of time for the activity, and fringe benefits such as health insurance and retirement (social security, teacher or university systems), workmen's compensation, etc., for each project staff member.

2. Contractual services. Anticipated expenditures for services rendered through contractual agreements with an individual or agency. These are considered subcontracted services, which are occasionally written under a separate contract by the funded agency. The costs are reserved to offset expenses for providing services not usually within the capabilities of the funded agency. Personnel records are seldom maintained for the people performing contractual services nor are such individuals eligible for personnel benefits accruing to regular, full-time staff members. They may be eligible to receive consulting fees not to exceed $100/day plus travel and per diem at prevailing rates. The consultant fee is for specified services rendered on-site and should be regarded as a maximum figure, rather than as a flat rate for consultant services. Consultant travel and per diem must be shown here and not under the travel category. All items rented for use during the term of a funding agreement are considered to be a contractual service.

3. Materials and supplies. Anticipated expenditures required to conduct the activity. Only those expenditures in excess of the regular agency or district operational costs

and necessary to conduct the activity should be shown. Specific costs must be itemized.

Examples of materials and supplies which are not allowable include:

a. Alterations or renovations of buildings
b. Construction of buildings or purchase of land or buildings
c. Dues to organizations, federations, or societies
d. Purchase of standard office furniture, desk sets, etc.
e. Entertainment
f. Establishment of contingency or petty cash funds

4. Travel. Include an itemized listing of all anticipated project staff travel. Consultant travel and per diem are shown under the contractual services category and not here. Travel is computed according to prevailing state rates and includes mileage, per diem, lodging, and other expenses (tolls and parking).

5. Other related expenses. Anticipated expenditures which cannot be itemized elsewhere in the proposed budget. Items in this category should be justified in terms of the funded activity. Indirect costs, not to exceed 8% of the total direct costs, may be charged against a funding agreement. Elementary and secondary schools are limited to their restricted indirect cost rate as established annually by the State Board of Education. Local education agencies which do not comply with all the requirements of the State Board accounting system are not eligible to charge indirect costs against the funding agreement.

Department of Adult, Vocational and Technical Education
100 North First Street
Springfield, Illinois 62777

FUNDING AGREEMENT*
For Vocational and Technical Education

☐ Program Approval and Evaluation
☐ Consultant Services
☐ Special Programs
☒ Research and Development
☐ Planning and Reports
☐ Operations
☐ Other (specify)

This funding agreement is between the Department of Adult, Vocational and Technical Education, Illinois Office of Education and the following institution or agency.

INSTITUTION OR AGENCY Vocational Education University	SUPERINTENDENT, PRESIDENT OR RESPONSIBLE UNIVERSITY OFFICIAL John Doe, President	
ADDRESS OF INSTITUTION OR AGENCY 200 Front Street, Hometown, IL 66666		PHONE (000) 000-0000
PROGRAM OR PROJECT TITLE Competency-Based Pre-Service Programs for Vocational Education Teachers		
NAME OF PROJECT DIRECTOR Dr. Mary Smith	DATES Starting Date 8/1/79 Ending Date 6/30/80	PHONE (000) 000-0000
ADDRESS		

REQUEST

REQUESTED ANNUAL BUDGET	LOCAL	AVTE	TOTAL
	$ 4,600.00	$ 16,552.00	$ 21,152.00

Vocational education funds are requested to provide financial support for the vocational/technical education activities as described in this agreement. This project shall meet State of Illinois and Federal legal requirements, where applicable.

6/1/79 — John Doe — President
Date — *Signature of Board Officer (Public Schools and Post Secondary Only)* — *Title*

Date — *Signature of Supt., President or Responsible University Official* — *Title*

TRANSMITTAL

This is to acknowledge the receipt of the proposed funding agreement for vocational and technical education activities, services and programs, and transmittal of same to the Department of Adult, Vocational and Technical Education.

– For University Use Only –

6/1/79 — Katherine Jones — Vocational Education University
Date — *Signature of Liaison Officer (Occupational Educator Coordinator)* — *University*

– For Community College Use Only –

Date — *Signature of Illinois Community College Board Representative* — *Position*

– For Public School Use Only –

Date — *Signature of Regional Superintendent* — *County*

– APPROVAL –

State and/or Federal vocational education funds are obligated in the amount of $ ____________ for items approved in the estimated budget. Adjustments and/or modifications are subject to written approval by both parties of this funding agreement.

Agreement Number — *Date* — *Signature of Assistant Superintendent*
Department of Adult, Vocational and Technical Education

IOE 15 29 (3/79)

SAMPLE BUDGET

I. SALARIES	BUDGET REQUEST[1] FROM SBE	LOCAL CONTRIBUTION	TOTAL BUDGET
1. Project director, 50% time/month for 10 months @ 1257.00 month	$ 5,285.00	$1,000.00	$ 6,285.00
a. Fringe benefits			
Retirement 8%	502.00	0.00	502.00
Insurance $14.21/ month	143.00	0.00	143.00
2. Instructor, 100% time/month for 12 months @ 630.00 month	6,560.00	1,000.00	7,560.00
a. Fringe benefits			
Insurance $8.90/month	106.80	0.00	106.80
3. Secretary, 960 hours @ 2.50/hour	0.00	2,400.00	2,400.00
a. Fringe benefits			
Insurance $8.90/month	53.40	0.00	53.40
Subtotal	$12,651.00	$4,400.00	$17,051.00
II. CONTRACTUAL SERVICES			
1. Consultant services 5 days @ 75.00/day (not to exceed $100/day)	$ 375.00	$ 0.00	$ 375.00
2. Consultant travel and per diem at prevailing State Board of Education rates[2]	200.00	0.00	200.00
3. Rental of facility for meetings	200.00	0.00	200.00
Subtotal	$ 775.00	0.00	775.00
III. MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES			
1. Office expenses (paper, duplication, etc.)	300.00	200.00	500.00
2. Expendable items (teaching materials, etc.)	400.00	0.00	400.00
3. Resource materials for project development	200.00	0.00	200.00
4. Dissemination costs (reports, publications, etc.)	500.00	0.00	500.00
Subtotal	$ 1,400.00	$ 200.00	$ 1,600.00

SAMPLE BUDGET

IV. TRAVEL (Staff only)	BUDGET REQUEST[1] FROM SBE	LOCAL CONTRIBUTION	TOTAL BUDGET
1. Project staff Travel and per diem for project staff at prevailing State Board of Education rates.[2] (No out-of-state travel will be allowed without prior express approval of the assistant superintendent of DAVTE)	$ 500.00	$ 0.00	$ 500.00
Subtotal	$ 500.00	$ 0.00	$ 500.00
V. OTHER RELATED EXPENSES			
1. Indirect costs of up to 8% of direct costs will be considered for universities or private agencies.[3]	$ 1,226.00	$ 0.00	$ 1,226.00
Subtotal	$ 1,226.00	$ 0.00	$ 1,226.00
TOTAL	$16,552.00	$4,600.00	$21,152.00

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[1] All entries in the column LOCAL CONTRIBUTION must be auditable expenditures.

[2] See State Board of Education Travel Regulations.

[3] Indirect cost rates vary depending on type of institution.

APPENDIX E

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Selected Proposal Guidelines

5. NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

This section of the proposal should be written in narrative form and include the following six subsections: 5.1 Introduction, 5.2 Objectives, 5.3 Procedures, 5.4 Evaluation, 5.5 Statement of Impact, and 5.6 Time/Sequence Chart.

An explanation of each area is as follows:

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Present an overview of the proposed activity including: (1) the rationale for the proposed activity, (2) a brief summary of the activity's goal, and (3) an overview of the procedural design and evaluation design.

This section of the narrative description is extremely important, especially for proposals submitted in response to open category RFPs. In such proposals, applicants must demonstrate a need to conduct the activity.

In a proposal written in response to an RFP requesting a specified activity, as compared to an open category, the introduction should demonstrate that the applicant's approach to the task is the most effective and efficient solution to the requested activity.

5.2 OBJECTIVES

List the outcome objectives of the proposed activity using Roman numerals. Each objective must be (1) related to the goal identified in the introduction (subsection 5.1), (2) stated in measurable terms, and (3) contain the following elements:

a. Target population(s)
b. Outcome(s) expected
c. Condition(s) (time and place) under which the outcome(s) are to be measured.

Sample objective:

I. Develop by March 15 of the project year a written, transportable model of competency-based preservice curriculum for teachers of vocational education, capable of implementation in medium and large preservice vocational education programs.

5.3 PROCEDURES

Indicate the procedures to be used in accomplishing the objectives. List the procedures in chronological order using Arabic numerals. Each procedure listed must include:

a. A cross-reference to the specific objectives(s) it is designed to help accomplish
b. A description of the procedure
c. When each procedure will be implemented and completed
d. Which staff member(s) will be involved in each procedure
e. What equipment, materials or facilities are necessary to conduct each specific procedure
f. The target population(s) to be served by each procedure

Sample Procedure:

1. A working list of competencies needed by all entry-level vocational education teachers will be compiled during August and September of the project year by the project's two graduate assistants using a survey technique to query a random sample of vocational educators in the midwestern states. (Objective I)

5.4 EVALUATION

Specify the techniques of evaluation to be used in the proposed activity. The purpose of the evaluation is to provide continuous feedback on the acceptability of the procedures, the achievement of the objectives, and the achievement of the proposed activity's goal. List the evaluation techniques in chronological order using lower case letters. Each technique listed must be cross-referenced to the specific procedure(s) and/or objective(s) it is designed to evaluate. Furthermore, state when each technique will be conducted. Two types of evaluation shall be utilized:

1. Evaluation of progress through periodic, planned assessment to determine if specific procedures result in progress towards achieving specific objectives and, thereby, the proposed acitivity's goal. If certain procedures do not facilitate progress, changes in the program design should be made.

2. Evaluation of objectives to determine to what degree the proposed activity's objectives have been met.

Sample Evaluation Technique:

a. Using the Evaluation of Transportability instrument (EOT) chairpersons of five medium and five large pre-service vocational education programs located in ten midwestern colleges and universities will be asked in late March to analyze the written model for degree of adoptability in their program. (Objective 1)

5.5 STATEMENT OF IMPACT

Public Law 94-482, as well as the State Board of Education/DAVTE, fully supports the concept of requiring study of the impact of a funded activity in relationship to the resources expended. Impact is defined as a specific measurable change or effect.

A. Intended impact(s)
In discussing each intended impact of the proposed activity include:

1. Target population(s) expected to be affected.

   Examples of target populations:
   - Students (including special populations of students)
   - Teachers
   - Guidance personnel
   - Administrators/supervisors
   - Employers
   - School board members
   - Teacher educators
   - Community leaders
   - Support personnel
   - Advisory committee

2. Quantitative effects expected for each target population.

   Examples of quantitative impacts:

   - Percentage or number of the target population who will:
     a. be exposed to the outcome
     b. understand the outcome
     c. adopt the outcome

   - Amount or proportion of funds allocated to implement the outcome
   - Number of schools that will secure or adopt an outcome
   - Duration of effect of the expected outcome
   - Amount of increased knowledge or skill

3. Qualitative effects expected for each target population.

   Examples of qualitative impacts:

   - Feelings of those involved (interest, relevance, willingness to engage again in the activity, recommendation to friends)
   - Changes in attitudes, interests, values, opinions, perceptions, beliefs about self or others
   - Willingness to continue outcomes under changed circumstances, e.g., termination of project funds
   - Beliefs about program effectiveness
   - Attitudes of community groups or visibility in the community
   - Extent to which the results seem to fit into existing educational settings

4. The expected time frame for each affect:
    a. Immediate impacts -- realized during the conduct of the activity or within twelve months following termination of the activity.
    b. Long-range impacts -- realized later than twelve months following termination of the activity. Ongoing impacts should be identified under this category and should be labeled as on-going

5. How the intended impact will be achieved

6. Methods of measuring/evaluating the activity's impact(s): intended and unintended effects, and qualitative and quantitative effects

Sample intended impact:

It is expected that the model will be implemented in at least two of the eight medium to large preservice vocational education programs in the state within two academic years following the completion of this project. This impact will be achieved by project staff through intensive faculty workshops and individual change agent one-on-one techniques with the faculties of those programs which express an interest in the model.

(See sample matrix on page 121)

7. Dissemination and utilization
Specify suggested methods for dissemination and utilization (i.e., dissemination, demonstration, adoption, and adaption) of the outcomes to be implemented during the conduct and/or at the conclusion of the activity. List the methods in chronological order using capital letters. Each method listed must include:
    a. A description of the dissemination or utilization method
    b. The persons responsible for implementing the specific method
    c. The target population(s) affected
    d. Indication of how the disseminated or utilized outcome will be of benefit to the target population(s)

Sample dissemination and utilization method

A. The project director will make a presentation on the model at the Illinois Vocational Association (IVA) state convention as well as at the conventions of those IVA affiliates which will have been convened by the project's termination date. It is anticipated that these presentations will make a wide audience of potential users (faculty in medium to large preservice vocational education programs) aware of the model and its proven transportability.

(See sample matrix on page 122)

5.6 TIME/SEQUENCE CHART

Organize the procedures, evaluation techniques, and dissemination and utilization methods into a chart using the format presented in the time/sequence chart on page 123. The chart must be completed using the following guidelines:

1. The time frame of the chart is from the month the project would start through June of the fiscal year in which the proposed activity would be conducted.
2. Enter the procedures, evaluation techniques, and dissemination and utilization methods in the chronological order in which they occur.
3. Enter each procedure, evaluation technique, and dissemination and utilization method into the chart under each month in which it will occur. (See the calendar cells in the sample chart.)
4. Concerning the PROCEDURES column:
    a. Identify each procedure using the same Arabic numeral used to identify it in the narrative description.
    b. Describe each procedure using a short phrase.
    c. Cross-reference each procedure to the applicable objective(s) using the same Roman numeral for the objective used to identify it in the narrative description. Place this numeral (or numerals) in parentheses following the phrase which describes the specific procedure. (See procedure 1 in the sample chart.)
5. Concerning the EVALUATION TECHNIQUES column:
    a. Identify each technique using the same lower case letter used to identify it in the narrative description.
    b. Describe each technique using a short phrase.
    c. Cross-reference each technique to applicable objective(s) and/or procedure(s) using the same numbering system (Roman or Arabic) and the same number used to identify the objective(s) and/or procedure(s) in the narrative description. Place these cross-reference(s) in parentheses following the phrase which describes the specific technique. (See evaluation technique b in the sample chart.)
    d. The identifying letter of a technique used to evaluate a procedure should be placed on the same line as the procedure which it evaluates. (See evaluation technique a in the sample chart.)

   e. The identifying letter of a technique used to evaluate an objective should occupy a line by itself. (See evaluation technique b in the sample chart.)

6. Concerning the DISSEMINATION AND UTILIZATION METHODS column:
   a. Identify each method using the capital letter used to identify it in the narrative description.
   b. Describe each method using a short phrase.
   c. The identifying letter of a dissemination or utilization method should occupy a line by itself. (See dissemination and utilization method A in the sample chart.)

INTENDED IMPACTS MATRIX

IMMEDIATE IMPACTS--WITHIN 12 MONTHS OF TERMINATION

rget Population(s)	Quantitative	Methods by Which Achieved	Evaluation

rget Population(s)	Qualitative	Methods by Which Achieved	Evaluation

LONG-RANGE IMPACTS--LATER THAN 12 MONTHS AFTER TERMINATION

rget Population(s)	Quantitative	Methods by Which Achieved	Evaluation

rget Population(s)	Qualitative	Methods by Which Achieved	Evaluation

DISSEMINATION AND UTILIZATION GUIDE

get Population(s)	Dissemination (Method/s) (When)	Demonstration (Method/s) (When)	Adoption/Adaption (Method/s) (When)

TIME/SEQUENCE CHART

(Guideline 5.6 - TIME/SEQUENCE CHART - must be closely followed when completing this chart)

Procedures	Evaluation Techniques	Dissemination & Utilization Methods	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June		
1. (descriptive phrase) (I)	a. (descriptive phrase) (1)		x	x											
		A. (descriptive phrase)	x			x			x				x		
2. (descriptive phrase) (I)	a. (descriptive phrase) (2)		x	x											
3. (descriptive phrase) (I)	a. (descriptive phrase) (3)			x											
	b. (descriptive phrase) (I; 1-3)			x											
4. (descriptive phrase) (III)	c. (descriptive phrase) (4)		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		
5. (descriptive phrase) (II)	d. (descriptive phrase) (5)				x	x	x								
6. (descriptive phrase) (II)	e. (descriptive phrase) (6)					x									
7. (descriptive phrase) (I, II, III)	f. (descriptive phrase) (7)					x			x						
8. (descriptive phrase) (IV)	a. (descriptive phrase) (8)						x								
9. (descriptive phrase) (IV)	g. (descriptive phrase) (9)							x	x						
10. (descriptive phrase) (III)	c. (descriptive phrase) (10)							x	x	x					
	b. (descriptive phrase) (II, III; 4-7, 10)									x					
	h. (descriptive phrase) (IV; 8, 9)									x					
11. (descriptive phrase) (V)	i. (descriptive phrase) (11)										x	x	x		
		B. (descriptive phrase)										x	x		
	j. (descriptive phrase) (V)												x		
		C. (descriptive phrase)											x		

Appendix F

PROPOSAL EVALUATION GUIDE INSTRUCTIONS

Team Reviewer

You should have:

1. One copy of the Request for Program Improvement Proposals in Vocational Education;
2. One copy of each proposal received in response to the RFP under consideration;
3. A Proposal Evaluation Guide for each of the proposals.

You will be independently critiquing every proposal submitted in response to a specific RFP. This review will be conducted using a standard Proposal Evaluation Guide.

Your careful completion of this Guide will:

1. Assist the Research and Development Section staff in selecting and negotiating the most appropriate proposal for funding; and
2. Provide information to assist applicants in critiquing their proposals.

A group review process will follow your independent critique of the proposals. The goal of this group review is to make recommendations to the Research and Development Section concerning these proposals (e.g., best proposal, proposal sections in need of change, suggested changes in these sections.)

In making recommendations remember that ideas in submitted proposals belong to the applicant. Thus, the goals, objectives, procedures or other ideas stated in one proposal should not be recommended for inclusion in another application.

The team may recommend that none of the proposals submitted in response to an RFP be funded.

Please evaluate the proposals based only upon the individual proposal's contents. During the review process, Research and Development Section staff will answer only factual questions that concern review or post-review procedures, proposal format or clarification of reviewer remarks concerning a proposal. Research and Development Section staff is instructed not to provide judgmental responses or responses that would result in information beyond what a proposal's contents demonstrate. Examples of these latter types of responses are the past performance of an applicant, professional opinions concerning proposed staff, methodologies, etc.

The manager of the Research and Development Section makes the final recommendation for funding of a proposal to the Assistant Superintendent, Department of Adult, Vocational and Technical Education. This recommendation is made after Research and Development staff review the written team recommendations, the completed evaluation forms, and other information. Past performance of an applicant is given major emphasis at this point in the review process.

You are asked to keep the proposals and specific review discussion in strict confidence once the review process is completed.

Your identity as a reviewer will be kept confidential and will not be released by the State Board of Education to an applicant. However, your review comments minus your name may be released to help the applicant critique his or her proposal.

Each review team will have a team coordinator. The team coordinator is either assigned by the Research and Development Section or by your team as its initial task.

If the team coordinator has not been assigned, your team will choose someone from its ranks. The group should select someone who will keep the group on task and bring closure to your discussions. The team coordinator's responsibility is to facilitate and expedite the group decision-making process.

Team Coordinator

In addition to your responsibilities as a team reviewer, you are responsible for facilitating and expediting the group review process. As a team coordinator you must keep the group on-task and must bring closure to discussions. You will be responsible for making decisions as to time allowed the team for discussion, for decision-making, and for making recommendations. You must also be prepared to resolve "hung juries".

The scoring procedure used in the Proposal Evaluation Guide is for personal use only. The scores may be used by a reviewer as a method of personally ranking the proposals, but these scores should not be made public and should not be used as the sole method by which the group makes its decision, i.e., a team should not decide its recommendations by ranking the cumulative scores of competing proposals. Rather, the scores must be corroborated or rejected through other methods such as structured and unstructured discussion.

In making final recommendations, remember that ideas in submitted proposals belong to the applicant. Thus, the goals, objectives, procedures or other ideas stated in one proposal should not be recommended for inclusion in any other proposal.

State Board of Education Staff

All staff (RDS and others) that participate in the review process must realize that they are in the position of being confidential employees who through their professional positions have gained information on proposals and applicants that should not be made public at the review sessions. Such information is of value, but only after the reviewer recommendations are completed.

RDS Staff

Review the Proposal Evaluation Guide with each team.

Remain neutral.

Participate in team activities only when giving factual information that concerns review or post-review procedures, proposal format or clarification of reviewer remarks concerning a proposal. During the review process do not answer questions concerning the past performance of an applicant or give professional opinions concerning proposed staff, methodologies, etc. This is to say, you are not to unduly influence team members. You may answer questions concerning such things as past performance or give professional opinions after the review team has submitted its final recommendations.

An optional but recommended task is to obtain feedback on how the review process might be improved. It is recommended that this discussion occur after the team has completed all of its responsibilities as a proposal-review team.

PROPOSAL EVALUATION GUIDE

RFP Code No. ______________________________

Proposal Title ______________________________

Agency ______________________________

Instructions:
Before rating the proposal, be sure to study the RFP to which the proposal is a response. Below are a series of questions which will require a response. Your careful completion of this Guide will: (1) Assist the Research and Development Section (RDS) staff in selecting and negotiating the most appropriate proposal for funding; and (2) provide RDS with information which will assist applicants in critiquing their proposals.

1 Does the proposal address the needs specified in the RFP?

Yes____(Continue with review)   No____(Comment required. Please cite specifics. The proposal needs no further evaluation.)

2 Does the proposal demonstrate that the completed project will have a significant impact on vocational education?

Yes____(Continue with review)   No____(Comment required. The proposal needs no further evaluation.)

Note: In scoring the following, one (1) is the lowest rating a proposal can receive in each area.

Objectives (____of 15 possible pts.)		Yes	No
1 Is each objective explicitly related to the intent of the RFP and the rationale of the proposal?......	1		
2 Does each objective contain the following elements:			
a Target population(s);............................	2a		
b Outcome(s) expected;.............................	2b		
c Criteria or components that will enable project staff to measure the degree to which the objective was achieved;...............................	2c		
d Time and place under which the outcome(s) are to be measured?....................................	2d		
3 Taken as a set, will the objectives accomplish the intent of the RFP as well as the goal of the proposal?.....................................	3		
4 (Response required)			

Strengths	Weaknesses

Procedures(____ of 15 possible pts.) Yes No

1 Is each procedure explicitly related to the objective(s) it is designed to accomplish?.............. 1

2 Is each procedure appropriate for accomplishing the objective(s) it is supposed to achieve?........ 2

3 Is each procedure explicit and specific as to:
  a When it will be implemented and completed........ 3a
  b Which staff member(s) will be involved........... 3b
  c What equipment, materials, or facilities are necessary?.. 3c
  d What target population(s) will be served?........ 3d

4 Taken as a set, will the procedures accomplish the intent of the RFP as well as the goal of the proposal?.. 4

5 (Response required)

Strengths Weaknesses

Evaluation(____ of 15 possible points) Yes No

1 Is each evaluation technique explicitly related to the specific procedure(s) and/or objective(s) it is designed to evaluate?......................... 1

2 Does each evaluation technique include a statement of when it will be conducted?...................... 2

3 Is each evaluation technique adequate to evaluate the procedure(s) and/or objective(s) it is designed to evaluate?... 3

4 Is evaluation of all procedure(s) and objective(s) planned?.. 4

5 Does each evaluation technique indicate which staff member(s) will be involved?......................... 5

6 (Response required)

Strengths Weaknesses

Impact(____ of 20 possible points) Yes No

A Statement of Impact (____ of 10 possible points)

1 Is each statement of an intended impact explicit and specific as to:
  a Target population(s)?............................. 1a
  b Criteria or components that will enable project staff or future researchers to measure the degree of specific change(s) that are intended to occur as a result of the project?...................... 1b
  c Methods by which the impact(s) will be measured/evaluated?.. 1c

Yes No

d When the impact(s) will be achieved?............ 1d
e Methods by which the impact will be achieved?.... 1e
2 (Response required)

Strengths	Weaknesses

B Dissemination and Utilization Statement(____of 10 possible points) Yes No

1 Is each dissemination or utilization method explicit and specific as to:
a What activities are involved?.................... 1a
b What person(s) are responsible for implementing the specific activities?......................... 1b
c What target population(s) will be affected?...... 1c
d What the benefits of the disseminated or utilized outcome will be to the target population?........ 1d
2 (Response required)

Strengths	Weaknesses

Time/Sequence Graphic Presentation(____of 5 possible points) Yes No

1 Are the procedures, evaluation techniques, and dissemination and utilization methods stated in the graphic presentation the same as those in the narrative?... 1
2 Are the procedures, evaluation techniques, and dissemination and utilization methods stated in the graphic presentation in chronological order with the procedures and evaluation techniques cross-referenced to the objective(s) and/or procedures they are designed to accomplish or assess?... 2
3 Will the graphic presentation aid in the monitoring of the project's activities?...................... 3
4 (Response required)

Strengths	Weaknesses

Qualifications(_____of 10 possible points) Yes No

1 Are the stated experiences and qualifications of the project director and of each of the proposed staff pertinent to project activities?............ 1

2 Are the specific responsiblities of the project director and of each of the proposed staff explicitly stated?.. 2

3 Are the stated experiences and qualifications of the consultant(s) and/or subcontractor(s) pertinent to the project activities?................. 3

4 Are the specific responsibilities of the consultant(s) and/or subcontractor(s) explicitly stated?.. 4

5 Are there provisions assuring that the prime contractor will retain supervision and administrative control over the subcontractor(s)?........ 5

6 Does the submitting agency have the necessary resources and facilities to implement the proposal? 6

7 Does the composition of proposed personnel reflect the State Board of Education mandate for equal employment/educational opportunities/affirmative action regardless of sex, color, national origin, religion, age, or handicap?........................ 7

8 (Response required)

Strengths	Weaknesses

Budget(_____of 10 possible points) Yes No

1 Are the budget figures realistic in terms of the project's:

a Objectives 1a

b Procedures (including evaluation, and dissemination and utilization methods that will occur by the end of the fiscal year) 1b

c Final products.................................. 1c

2 (Response required)

Strengths	Weaknesses

Equity(_____of 10 possible points) Yes No

1 Does the content of the proposal indicate efforts planned for complying with the State Board of Education mandate for sex-fair language and visuals in all written and/or audio-visual materials produced?.. 1

Yes No

2 Do the procedures, evaluation techniques, and other proposed activities (e.g., workshops) fairly represent all populations relevant to the proposed project (e.g., sex, color, national origin, religion, age or handicap)?.......................... 2

3 (Response required)

Strengths	Weaknesses

Synthesis

1 Why do you recommend or not recommend (circle one) this proposal for funding? Use your responses to the strengths/weaknesses question under each area as the basis for your statement.

2 I rank this proposal _____ of the _____ proposals submitted.

Appendix G

FINAL REPORT FORMAT

1. COVER PAGE

Only the information listed below should appear, in sequence, on the cover page of final reports.

a. Official project title

b. State Board of Education

Donald F. Muirheid, Chairman

Joseph M. Cronin, State Superintendent of Education

2. FRONTISPIECE

A frontispiece is the first page or title page of a publication. The information listed below should appear on the frontispiece.

a. Title of document

b. Agency identification

c. Name of department producing document

d. Springfield, Illinois

e. Publication date

f. Disclaimer

In the event the document is a product of a federal contract, the project number may appear under the department name.

3. FOREWORD

A foreword is optional.

a. Only a foreword is to be used, eliminating the use of a preface and/or introduction.

b. A foreword should not exceed one page in length.

c. The following information, in sequence, should be presented:

  (1) The document title
  (2) The purpose of the document and if it is published on a regular basis
  (3) The source of information from which the publication was prepared, if this is applicable
  (4) The signature of the state superintendent

Deviation from these standards will be allowed only with the express, written permission of the state superintendent.

4. BODY OF THE REPORT

a. DAVTE funding agreement number

b. Official project title

c. Project director

d. Funded agency

e. Location

f. Time period covered

g. Final report abstract

  (1) Objectives of project
  (2) Procedures of implementation
  (3) Contribution to vocational and technical education
  (4) Products to be delivered

h. Paid participants in activity, e.g., project staff and consultants

  (1) Name and address
  (2) Position or job function
  (3) Institution
  (4) Background and experience

i. Final product(s) abstract

j. Conference/workshop summary(s)

k. Resource listing. Include an itemized list of all resource and/or instructional materials purchased for the project. Unless otherwise negotiated, all materials purchased through the funding agreement are to be considered the property of the State Board of Education and delivered to the DAVTE before the final claim for reimbursement is processed.

l. Accomplishments, including significant findings, during the funding period. List approved project objectives and describe progress toward attaining these objectives.

m. Major activities and events.

n. Problems. Describe any departures, including timing, from the original project plan; discuss special problems encountered.

o. Publicity activities. Itemize all newspaper or journal articles or other published materials about the project. A copy of each item should be attached. List all visits to the project site by individuals from other organizations.

p. Dissemination activities. Describe method of dissemination and identify recipients of dissemination activities.

q. Resource persons, e.g., advisory council members and guest speakers:

    (1) Name
    (2) Position
    (3) Contribution to the activity

r. Summations of evaluation data collected

s. Conclusions and recommendations concerning this activity and suggestions for possible future activities of a similar nature

t. Staff employment and utilization. Note any changes in staff personnel or staffing plans by additions, departures, or revisions of percentage of time or other commitments to the project.

u. Staff development. Describe any inservice training for teachers, counselors, and supervisors or any other activities of a professional nature for project staff.

v. Other activities

w. Attach a copy of materials developed

5. On the inside of the cover, the frontispiece, or the back of the publication, the following shall be printed:

The State Board of Education insures equal employment/educational opportunities/affirmative action regardless of race, sex, color, national origin, religion, age, or handicap

PROPOSAL ABSTRACT FORMAT

TITLE: Competency-Based Preservice Program for Teachers of Vocational Education

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR(s): Dr. M. Smith, Professor of Education

INSTITUTION: Vocational Education University

LOCATION: 200 Front Street, Hometown, IL 66666

OBJECTIVES:

1. A comprehensive, innovative program for the preparation of teachers of vocational education curricula will be developed.

2. A transportable model of the above program will be developed.

3. The model program will be field-tested with twenty senior students in Vocational Education University's teacher education program for a minimum of one semester.

4. A series of evaluation instruments will be developed to provide formative and summative evaluation.

PROCEDURES:

1. A program of courses and activities (e.g., internships) will be developed to provide for the acquisition of the necessary competencies.

2. Twenty senior education students will be recruited and enrolled as program participants by February 1, 1980.

3. Appropriate evaluation instruments or activities will be developed and administered beginning September 1, 1980.

4. A follow-up survey of the activities of the twenty participants will be completed by July 1, 1981.

EXPECTED CONTRIBUTION OR POTENTIAL IMPACT ON VOCATIONAL & TECHNICAL EDUCATION:

A possible means for renewal of the total university-based programs for preparation of vocational education personnel.

PRODUCT(S) TO BE DELIVERED:

300 copies of A Model for Competency-Based Preservice Programs for Teachers of Vocational Education will be mailed to the SBE/DAVTE by July 31, 1980.

12 copies of a final report will be mailed to the SBE/DAVTE by July 31, 1980.

Appendix H

MASTER DISSEMINATION LIST

RECIPIENTS	Required Copies
A. NATIONAL	
USOE/BOAE	2
ERIC/NCRVE	2
RCUs	56
USOE Regional Offices	2
NNCCVTE Centers	68
WSNCC (10) NWNCC (12) MWNCC (10) SENCC (10) NENCC (12) ECNCC (14)	
B. STATE	
Illinois State Library	3/40
Illinois State Advisory Council for Adult, Vocational & Technical Education	1
Illinois Community College Board	1
Illinois University Occupational Education Coordinating Council	8 x
Illinois Board of Higher Education	1
Regional Superintendents	78
Local Districts with One and Five Year Plan	
Elementary	73
Secondary	568
Area Vocational Centers	30
Community Colleges	50
Handicapped & Disadvantaged Sites	9
Career Guidance Centers	19
Displaced Homemaker Centers	2+
Work/Education Councils	4+
Adult Education Centers	5
Illinois Employment & Training Council	1
IVA Membership	5,000
C. INTERNAL AGENCY	
SBE Superintendent	1
SBE Deputy Superintendent	1
SBE Assistant Superintendents	10
DAVTE	
Managers	8
Professionals	87
Support	25
R&D Staff (Circulation only)	12 (1)
Illinois Resource & Dissemination Network	2

SBE Regional Offices	
DeKalb	1
Chicago	1
Champaign	1
Springfield	1
Mt. Vernon	1
Carbondale	1
D. OTHERS	
Author Copies	
Held for Workshops	
Held for Sub-Regionals	1,500

Mailing Labels

The SBE/DAVTE can provide self-adhesive mailing labels which are categorized by groups, as listed below:

Group Name	Approximate Number
Educational Service Regions	79
Elementary Districts (Supt.)	458
Secondary Districts (Supt.)	130
Unit Districts (Supt.)	447
Elementary and Special Attendance Centers (Prin.)	3,344
Junior High Attendance Centers (Prin.)	514
High School Attendance Centers (Prin.)	762
Elementary Non-Public Attendance Centers (Prin.)	1,005
Secondary Non-Public Attendance Centers (Prin.)	134
Unit Non-Public (Attendance Centers (Prin.)	97
Television Stations	42
Radio Stations	218
Daily Newspapers	95
Weekly Newspapers	420
Special Media (Magazines, Bureaus, and Wires)	156
College and University Campus Media	74
Illinois High School Press Association	975
Ethnic Groups	37
National Radio Stations	77
INSPRA (Ill-Nat School Public Relations Assoc.)	85
National Public Radio Stations	134
Public Junior Colleges	51
Private Junior Colleges	8
Illinois Senior State Universities	14
Illinois Private Colleges and Universities	90
Special Education Administrators	87
Deans of College of Education (State Universities)	61

Group Name	Approximate Number
Mt. Vernon Program Services Team	16
Urbana Program Services Team	17
DeKalb Program Services Team	11
Springfield Program Services Team	12
Chicago Program Services Team	17
State Board of Education	18
State Directors of Vocational Education	53
Principals--Elementary (With Vocational Education Plans)	67
Chief School Administrators--Elementary (With Vocational Education Plans)	45
Area Vocational Center Directors	31
Deans of Vocational Education (Community Colleges)	51
University Liaison Council Members	9
Correctional Institutions	64
Occupational Education Departments (Secondary)	735
CETA Prime Sponsors	48
Career Guidance Centers	19
National Association of Vocational Technical Education Communicators (NAVTEC)	41